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Of Rags and Riches:

Indian Buddhist Patronage Networks in the Early Historic Period

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Of Rags and Riches:

Indian Buddhist Patronage Networks in the Early Historic Period

By

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Dissertation

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For Kaitlyn

and all those who suffer from mental illness.

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Of Rags and Riches:

Indian Buddhist Patronage Networks in the Early Historic Period

by

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My interdisciplinary dissertation uses early Indian Buddhism from 300 BCE to 300 CE as a case study for discerning connections between emergent religious institutions and economic networks in ancient South Asia using donative epigraphy. Buddhist inscriptional, architectural, literary, and artistic evidence from this period of Indian history suggests that the early Indian Buddhist monastic institution was a burgeoning group of disparate monks who rapidly gained economic power for the sake of survival. As such, they creatively used new, innovative economic strategies to eventually dominate the religious landscape of ancient India using commercial networks to catalyze the spread of religious values alongside a mercantile ethos. I argue that these economic strategies reveal some degree of active engagement with virtues traditionally maligned by monastic law, such as the accumulation of wealth and frequent exchange of coined money. Alternating between material and textual datasets, this dissertation identifies reliquary mounds (*stūpa*-

s) used for worship as nodes within the economic networks that allowed charismatic monastic and non-monastic Buddhists to derive social capital through mobilizing financial resources. In turn, these charismatic individuals may have harnessed religious power imbued in auspicious religious locations to convert it to symbolic capital whereby they could permanently enshrine objects and deceased individuals of their choosing for worship. As these religious figureheads gained fame and power so too did their newly fashioned style of Buddhism. Centralized around stone monumental architecture, the Buddhist community became a great force in shaping future historical trajectories for religion in South Asia.

These findings serve the fields of Buddhist Studies and the History of Religions in several ways. First, they emphasize the need to read Buddhist and religious sources with ongoing cultural changes such as economic growth, urbanization, and expanding communication networks. Next, these conclusions expand our understanding of one of the earliest forms of Buddhism accessible through extant evidence and attempt to reconfigure how religions employ legitimizing processes for the sake of survival. Lastly, I delineate three seeds of institutionalized religion important for the expansion of early Buddhism: 1.) the advent of writing; 2.) charismatic entrepreneurship; and 3.) increased societal and institutional complexity.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH IMPETUS AND SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

To orient the dissertation, I would like to begin with a brief story from a recent research trip to India. Although this dissertation is a study of the ancient past, the themes, sentiments, and tensions present in the socio-religious cultural fabrics thousands of years ago are still present and relevant to modern day religious Buddhist practice. The past does not exist in a vacuum; rather, it is a major force that shapes and converses with the present.

In the winter of 2013, thousands of international pilgrims descended upon the small town to worship and make offerings at the Bodhi Tree as they do every winter season in modern Bodh Gaya.[1] These pilgrims are mostly lay devotees from East or Southeast Asia, but many are monastic. Some come individually, others in groups ranging from two or three to several hundred. One group, from Myanmar, came to stay at the *vihāra* where I had been living. They were unusual in several respects: they had little interest in the Bodhi Tree, the Mahābodhi Temple, or in the surrounding pilgrimage places like Nalanda, Sarnath, or the relatively newly uncovered Sujata *stūpa* in a neighboring village. They were Buddhists—and were resolved to living in a thriving Buddhist monastery for a full month—but their pilgrimage leader was a famous *Weikza-*

[1] Throughout this dissertation, I have chosen to omit diacritics for modern place-names. However, for historical place-names, I do include diacritics. For instance, I spell modern day Sanchi as such whereas other scholars may have previously spelled it Sāñcī or even Sāñchī. Similarly, Vaishali, the ancient city, would be spelled either as Vesāli or as Vaiśālī depending on whether the source text is in Pāli or Sanskrit.

Lam wizard[2] of particular charisma. He wore a shiny, silver western-styled suit and showered his followers with money to celebrate the birthday of the *vihāra*'s monastic Abbot.[3]

In between their conversations on new donated iPhones, the resident monks of the *vihāra* engaged in regular merriment alongside the laypersons who had brought loud instruments that strummed until the wee morning hours. As soon as the sun came up, the celebrations began anew. Frequently, the *vihāra* came under a distinct fog from dozens of makeshift cooking fires. The pilgrims cooked seasoned fish, red velvet cakes, and other delicacies. Never before had I witnessed such loud, festive, religious celebration in a place reserved for quiet living and worship.[4] The Wizard's group of 180 pilgrims had come for an annual international Theravādin Tipiṭaka festival held in Bodh Gaya at the Kālacakra grounds.[5] For the second year in a row, Myanmar was the host country of the

[2] *Weikza* (or *Weizza*) is Burmese for the Pāli word *vijjādhara*, or 'wizard.' During the 18th and 19th century in Myanmar, many Buddhists began to focus on cultivating merit for the sake of being reborn in a time with the future Buddha Metteyya since enlightenment was no longer possible given the amount of time since the Buddha's life. The *Weikza-lam* path is a recent movement whereby practitioners instead seek immortality to live until Metteyya appears. Many *weikza* practitioners—who are always male—practice alchemy and are able to recite magical incantations. Some *weikza* channel spirits and consider themselves protectors against modernity. See Bénédicte Brac de la Perrière. "Spirits Versus Weikza." *The Journal of Burma Studies* 16, no. 2 (2012): 149–79; Juliane Schober. "The Longevity of Weikza and Their Practices." *The Journal of Burma Studies* 16, no. 2 (2012): 283–307; and Patrick Pranke. "On Saints and Wizards." *Journal of the International Association for Buddhist Studies* 33, no. 1 (2010): 453–88.

[3] I use the term Abbot to describe the monk in charge over the *vihāra* because this is the term the other monks used to describe him, in English. Not all the monks could speak English, however. The Abbot's English was quite good—he was known for telling subtle jokes—but his age and accent made him very difficult to understand.

[4] Previously, I had spent some months in the same monastery and other Theravāda monasteries like it during other research trips in 2005 and 2009. Even though pilgrims often usually caused some stir, this group was unique in the way they setup residence and made the place their own, often superseding the authority of the Abbot by coming and going as they pleased and more or less doing what they wanted. Of course, it was said that the Abbot had given permission for the events but it was difficult to assess whether each and every fine detail was authorized.

[5] The Kālacakra Maidan in Bodh Gaya is reserved for large festivals or other events. However, primarily, it is used for Tibetan Kālacakra initiation held by the Dalai Lama, hence the grounds' name. When not in use by one *saṁgha* or another, the grounds are used by local children to play cricket or soccer.

festival so that many prestigious monks and other figureheads were in town to take part in the proceedings.

What struck me about the events was the charismatic authority imbued in the Wizard. Not only did the lay devotees revere him just as they revered the Abbot of the monastery, himself a powerful figure, but the Wizard came and went as he pleased, where he pleased. I once saw him enter the Mahābodhi Temple grounds during a normally off-limit time by waiving off the guards with his hands, as if he had cast a spell on them. Such an act was surprising since the summer bombings at the Mahābodhi Temple in 2013 had caused a vast increase in security inside and outside the area. Visitors were subjected to a much higher level of scrutiny by guards prior to entry than during my previous visits to Bodh Gaya. The Wizard, however, walked in unimpeded.[6]

The Wizard's primary goal was to cultivate generosity, or *dāna*. He had paid for the flights of the 180 pilgrims and gifted thousands of dollars (in USD) to the pilgrims at night during the festivities. Two events best typified his charity. First was the 'Lucky Lottery,' held every other night during the month-long period. During the 'Lucky Lottery,' the Wizard chose names from a container to win a prize. The winners danced to the stage--setup in the Abbot's garden replete with loud speakers and a decorations--to collect a prize, usually a piece of clothing, accessory, or cash. Even though it was called the 'Lucky Lottery,' everyone in the group eventually won. Between drawing names, the pilgrims performed famous songs, did karaoke, or dance routines.

[6] One might tend to think that in a place like India a simple bribe could have allowed for such quick access. However, I saw no exchange between the Wizard and the guards.

The second major event was the celebration of the Abbot's birthday. An extended gathering happened that night complete with even louder music, more lavish gifts, and a birthday cake presented during the evening that the Abbot was unable to eat due to his monastic vows. Traditional prayers were read between the songs and dances. The culmination of the celebration was a large gift by the Wizard to the Abbot. The gift was a cardboard money tree with US Dollars stapled on. By my calculation, there was at least $15,000 stapled to the money tree--a tremendous gift by any account, especially by Bihari standards.[7] However, lavish gifts given to the various *saṁgha*'s or to the Mahābodhi Temple complex should have come as no surprise, since that same year the King of Thailand gifted 660 pounds of gold to adorn the crowning spire of the Mahābodhi Temple.[8]

The impressive amount of financial support mobilized by the Wizard made me think about the nature of the relationship between donors and donees, between lay patrons and the *saṁgha*, and between monastics who were unable to participate directly in lavish donation ceremonies and the ceremonies themselves. How did the Abbot obtain the patronage of the Wizard? Why did the Wizard choose that particular monastery?[9] I was told that the money was for the construction of a new multi-floored residence for the Abbot himself, replete with modern amenities. However, the residence was already under construction behind the makeshift soundstage and festive tent in the garden. Further, the Abbot's birthday, I was told, was not even in the winter. Thinking about the status and

[7] The monastery had been robbed at gunpoint sometime in the late 1990s, which typified Bihar as a poor Indian state given its reputation for violence and corruption at all political and local levels.
[8] See Robin Pagnamenta. "Buddhist Temple Gets £9m Golden Facelift." *The Times (London)*, November 15, 2013, 54.

influence of wealthy donors, I wondered what the early historical precedent was for the transmission of wealth into the Buddhist *saṁgha* and if all large donations came with such fanfare and quirks.

These few observations provide a modern context for the concerns of this dissertation. Although I seek to explore ancient Buddhism in India during a formative period, I cannot help but to introduce the subject matter with contemporary practice since it is my supposition that the relationship between the Buddhist monastic *saṁgha* and money has always, from the earliest material evidence available, been adaptive and elastic rather than maladaptive and unyielding.

According to normative monastic texts, such as the Pāli canon, Buddhist monks were to rely upon the four basic *nissaya*-s, or 'resources.' These were *piṇḍiyālopabhojana*, 'meal scraps,' *paṁsukūlacīvara*, 'robes of rags,' *rukkhamūlasenāsana*, 'lodging at the foot of a tree,' and *pūtimuttabhesajja*, 'medicine of foul-smelling cattle urine.' The early monastic order was more or less operating within the already-established modes of ascetic life.[10] As such, dressing in garments made of grass, tree bark, hair, owl feathers, deerskins, or in nothing at all was not unusual. To distinguish Buddhist renunciants from the others, the Buddha allowed his monks to don robes made up of found rags.[11] It is possible that the reason had little to do with

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[9] There is also a particularly famous Myanmar *vihāra* in Sarnath.

[10] An excellent resource for further comments and discussion is Patrick Olivelle's work on Buddhism: *The Origin and the Early Development of Buddhist Monachism*, Colombo: Gunasena, 1974.

[11] Vin I, 289. Mohan Wijayaratna comments, "According to the *Vinaya,* two kinds of rag were used to make up the garments of Buddhist monks. Some were pieces of cloth collected in burial-grounds, others were scraps of material gathered in streets and near shops. We do not know where the first kind came from; perhaps they were the clothes corpses had been dressed in, or perhaps people threw them away in cremation-grounds specifically for ascetics to gather. The *Vinaya* describes how traveling monks, in the

soteriological principles and everything to do with practical, economical concerns. As these early layers of Buddhist literature reveal, the monastic order was anything but prominent, coherently organized, or settled. Eventually, over time, the disparate order acquired firm rules (for instance, the entire *pāṭimokkha*), leadership (from monks known in literature like Ānanda, Mahākassapa, Sāriputta, and Mahāmoggalāna), lodgings and material goods (like Jetavana), and, perhaps most important of all to the survival of the burgeoning group, patronage from royals and wealthy elites.

An increase in circulated wealth within the order and a drastic increase in prestige among the communities where donations were solicited lead to an age of monumentality within Indian Buddhism. During the Early Historic Period (3rd century BCE to 3rd century CE), Buddhist monastic sites were erected all over India for perhaps the first time in permanent materials like stone and brick. As time went on, the monastic order gained in power, fame, and notoriety as they gradually acquired more followers and hence more patronage. How did the monks, clad in rags, become powerful?[12] Further, to what extent can we study wealth, donation practices (particularly the redistribution of wealth), and

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first years of the Community, would collect rags in cremation-grounds which they chanced to find on their way. It is possible that people deliberately threw pieces of material there for that purpose. However, the fact that monks used rags gathered in cremation-grounds did not mean that they wore dirty garments, or saw a special virtue in doing so. On the contrary, the *Vinaya* describes them washing the rags before using them. We do not know the origin of the pieces of cloth that monks collected in streets and in front of shops either. Perhaps they were old and worn out, perhaps they were thrown away on purpose for the monks to use." See Mohan Wijayaratna. *Buddhist Monastic Life*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 33.

[12] I define power as representing "the capacity to achieve outcomes" as Giddens does and, indeed, by the later generations found in my collected data, the Buddhist *saṁgha* had achieved power. Anthony Giddens. *The Constitution of Society*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p. 29. Chiefs fashion power from whatever media are at hand and, if Michael Mann is correct, that societies are organized power networks, then it would make sense for the *saṁgha* aimed to exploit these organized power networks to fashion power in order to achieve a very specific outcome, i.e., the survival and sustainability of itself as an

attitudes towards wealth from the available sources? Moreover, what are the available sources? How might these sources be restrictive? What can the obtainment and usage of wealth reveal to us about the expansion of the *saṁgha* as an institution? Amongst the *saṁgha*, who might have been in charge of wealth or donation management? What role do powerful, charismatic figureheads play? Lastly, how do other historical processes, such as the advent of new technologies like writing, affect the *saṁgha*'s cultivation of wealth? Guided by these questions and the accumulated data, I propose new elements that may be added to our historical model of early Indian Buddhism.

I believe some answers could lay in the hundreds of donative records found inscribed in stone inside pilgrimage complexes built by early Buddhists. I view these records of financial transactions as a spyglass into the financial history of the early institution. These records may be found accompanying *stūpa*-s, hemispherical reliquary mounds meant to either enshrine relics for ritual engagement, or commemorate the Buddha or the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*. Typically, devotees circumambulate the *stūpa* hoping to acquire merit or instill pious mental feelings for themselves or others. The *stūpa*-s are usually large, thrusting five to more than thirty feet into the open air.[13] The donative inscriptions are found on the surrounding *vedikā*, a thick stone fence that

institution. See Michael Mann. *The Sources of Social Power, Volume I*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 1.

[13] Many *stūpa*-s can, of course, be found at cave sites or within monasteries. Unless otherwise noted, most of the *stūpa*-s referenced in this dissertation were not originally constructed in caves or monasteries but rather as objects of veneration themselves worthy of their own complex. One may cite numerous references to *stūpa*-s in caves but a strategic survey to begin such an investigation is Vidya Dehejia's *Early Buddhist Rock Temples*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972. A comprehensive edited volume containing recent work on the subjects of *stūpa*-s more broadly is *Buddhist Stūpas in South Asia*. Edited by Jason D Hawkes and Akira Shimada, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009. As for Sanchi, my primary focus, I will cite the classic volume: *Unseen Presence*. Edited by Vidya Dehejia and K B Agrawala, Mumbai: Marg Publications, 1996.

separates the circumambulatory path from the outside world.[14] There are well over one thousand donative inscriptions found at such sites dating to the Early Historic Period.[15]

To carry out the project, I have focused on one major ancient Indian Buddhist pilgrimage site in modern day Madhya Pradesh called Sanchi. Sanchi is an excellent topic of study because it contains a wealth of material. It is home to not only some of the earliest and best preserved architectural and art historical remains, but also to the largest single Buddhist epigraphic repository in ancient India. In the Early Historic Period, Sanchi functioned as a regional hub for Buddhism locally by providing Buddhists in the area with an outlet for their piety and generosity in return for merit. The Sanchi hilltop *stūpa*-s near Vidisha were not the only *stūpa*-s in the area, for also implicit in my survey are the surrounding monastic sites Satdhara, Andher, Morel Khurd, and Sonari. From

[14] A comprehensive examination of rituals performed at cave *stūpa*-s and also open-air *stūpa*-s may be found in Fogelin's "Ritual and Presentation in Early Buddhist Religious Architecture." *Asian Perspectives* 42, no. 1 (2003). The article is noteworthy for a number of reasons, not least of which is its unique attempt to use material culture to understand religious motivations, a kind of strategy seriously lacking in attempts within Buddhology. However, Fogelin's use of donative inscriptions is incomplete and in sore need of revision. Later in this dissertation I will present some corrected numbers pertaining to donors' occupations and place within the local monastic orders. Another more recent attempt at studying *stūpa*-s by Fogelin may be found, now, in Lars Fogelin. "Material Practice and the Metamorphosis of a Sign." *Asian Perspectives* 51, no. 2 (2014): 278–310. Related to Sanchi more specifically is Julia Shaw's theory that platformed monasteries were used in and around Sanchi to view the great *stūpa* found on the main hilltop. She presumes that viewing platforms on separate hilltops one or more kilometers away functioned to assist monastics or the laity in viewing the house of the Buddha's corporeal relics. See *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*, London: The British Association for South Asian Studies: The British Academy, 2007, pp. 90-1. The subject is again taken up in Julia Shaw. "Monasteries, Monasticism, and Patronage in Ancient India." *South Asian Studies* 27, no. 2 (October 4, 2011): 111–30.

[15] To date, there are very few studies that comprehensively consider all the available evidence. In Chapter 3, I will deal with the topic in greater detail. The most comprehensive collection of Buddhist epigraphy is Keishō Tsukamoto. *Indo Bukkyō Himei No Kenkyū (a Comprehensive Study of Indian Buddhist Inscriptions)*. Vols. 1-3, Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten, 1996. Unfortunately, the book is entirely in Japanese but does contain all of the records known to Tsukamoto until the publication of the volumes in 1996. There are some errors in the presentation and representation of the inscriptions but for the most part the volumes remain the definitive standard for launching any study of Indian Buddhist inscriptions. Tsukamoto's index is extremely valuable, as is the rest of the book and translations if one is able to read Japanese. Although I am not a scholar of Japanese, I thank my friends Dan Doyen and Gwendolyn Ross who are fluent in

found reliquaries and accompanying inscriptions from these Sanchi area sites, we know that the Hemavata Mainstream Buddhist school operated here in the late centuries Before the Common Era.

I view donative inscriptions as typically short records for posterity that came to bear more and more meaning.[16] For the generations presented in this dissertation, the records contained barely more than the donor's name, location, title (if any), and relations (if any). Taken together, the hundreds of inscriptions form a roster of donors and ultimately shed sociological light on Early Historic Period Indian Buddhism. Unfortunately, scholars have only studied them in limited capacity in the past. I attempt to read them in their context as objects within the field of material culture as well as their relationships to normative monastic literature.

Once I began studying Sanchi and the donative records I realized their hidden potential for understanding some material practices of early Buddhism. While preparing for my dissertation, I traveled many times to Sanchi (and indeed to many other similar *stūpa* pilgrimage sites found throughout India) to photograph, re-read and interpret the donative epigraphy. In this dissertation, I present my findings, which are based on my own re-reading of the Sanchi Early Historic Inscriptions.[17] I worked with the inscriptions

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Japanese in assisting in translation. To scholars who are able to read, edit, and troubleshoot Prakrit, Sanskrit, and epigraphical hybrid-Prakrit-cum-Sanskrit, the volumes are an indispensable resource.

[16] My recently published article takes up this project and is reiterated again in Chapter 3. See Matthew D. Milligan. "The Development and Representation of Ritual in Early Indian Buddhist Donative Epigraphy." *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies* 15 (2013): 171–86. With the word meaning, I refer to the monastic and lay Buddhists who were the primary donors and donees.

[17] Thankfully, most of the inscriptions as they have been edited by others, namely Lüders, Marshall and Majumdar, and, of course, Tsukamoto, were not in need of serious revision. For the pioneering works, Heinrich Lüders. "A List of Brāhmī Inscriptions." *Epigraphia Indica* 10 (1912): 1–226; John H Marshall, Alfred Foucher, and Nani G Majumdar. *The Monuments of Sāñchī*. Vol. 1, Delhi: Swati Publications, 1982. In my research, I did encounter several previously unnoticed donative inscriptions at Sanchi *stūpa* 2. Other

for more than a decade, but have only recently been able to obtain a sophisticated understanding of their nature historically by comparing and contrasting them with each other along a timeline. Slowly, with attention to small details, a new image of early Buddhism's financial history, its patronage networks, and its charismatic entrepreneurial actors began to emerge. I weighed these historical observations against the reflections made during my time living in the monastery in Bodh Gaya and began to see a nascent picture of religion and its need for financial security. For, without the loud, boisterous, flocking, innumerable pilgrims and their charismatic Wizard leader with his money tree, the monastery would have been hard pressed to run efficiently and replace its rapidly decaying old buildings.

1.2 ORIENTATIONS

This dissertation is really about contradictions. Although I set out to study monastic Buddhism, I wound up looking closer at topics traditionally maligned by most forms of monastic Buddhism, such as wealth and elite 'high culture.' At the core of my intellectual mind, this is the most puzzling historical question for me: *why* and *how* did a disparate group of world-renouncing—or semi-world-renouncing—rag-wearing wanderers suddenly become responsible for enormous permanent stone structures? For me, as I argue throughout this dissertation, these evidences, which included not only buildings, but relics, wonderful works of art and architecture, written texts, collections of

editorial revisions to known inscriptions are minor and not worth mentioning in this introduction. The importance and specific research findings of re-reading the inscriptions in their original *brāhmī* and Prakrit will be discussed in Chapter 3.

coins/gems/and other prestige goods, and *people* form what I call the "institution" of Buddhism. This "institution" seems to be one a unique cultural development within the entirety of South Asian history since it somehow impressively mustered together resources only the most powerful, wealthiest, legitimized, and networked organizations could have done to produce lasting monuments that millions of people still to this day visit, worship, and admire. The trick, as I think I have determined from my long-investigation of this era culminated in this dissertation, is an innovative, inclusivistic approach towards the aggrandizement of wealth. These monks and nuns harnessed some kind of power that only they could—and it rivaled the power mustered together by emperors.

To me, the donative inscriptions found at Sanchi are records of micro-transactions. They are lasting impressions—maybe even receipts—of a transaction between individuals and the institution. Individually, they are remarkable because they give agency to forgotten everyday persons—collectively, however, they form a roster from which we can analyze and glean insights into the human backbone of the wondrous institution that somehow fundamentally altered how religion impacted the geographic landscape. Essentially, from about the time Sanchi was founded in the 3rd century BCE, separate religious localities with monumentally large structures became common place. Prior to this era, there were scarcely few religious sites (that we know of) dedicated strictly to religious practice via the *interaction* with some huge material object. Perhaps it was the renunciant ideology of Buddhism itself that allowed grandiose buildings to be built away from the city for the sake of quiet contemplation.

I determined that the most efficient way to study the foundation of Sanchi and the underlying institution was to define, describe, and analyze the patronage of the site via its surviving records, which admittedly is limited, although substantially better than any other Early Historic Period Buddhist site yet known. The emergent donor network revealed a series of connected villages, cities and elite donors and offers us an opportunity to informatively investigate the limited available evidence for how such a Buddhist institution may have functioned during a period of oral literature, religious competition, and new socio-cultural developments like urbanization. I decided to "test" the donor network for performance by looking at how it changed over time. What I found was that the network simultaneously became larger and more efficient. Over time, there were more nodes, more donors, and more gifts per donor. I take such network growth as an indication that the Buddhist institution was also growing. The donative records functioned as a kind of visual archive of these donors' generosity. Besides the mass aggregation and analysis of the total corpus of donations I also found that there were separate strains of donative records, each with a unique type of language, placement, and meaning.

Institutions

My dissertation aims to construct a timeline by which we can delineate the progression of Buddhism towards an institutionalized religion. I deliberately utilize the term 'institution' instead of 'organization' for a number of reasons. First, there is not enough evidence to study any organization that may have been active at Sanchi. It is possible that the entire site was governed by a single organization, but it is also possible that the site was

maintained by separate organizations with similar goals. Without further evidence, I am tentative about discussing the monastic organization with any confidence.

With this conservative approach, I tend to agree with a recent definition of institution put forth by Geoffrey M. Hodgson that institutions are "systems of established and embedded social rules that structure social interactions." Conversely, he defines organization as "special institutions that involve (a) criteria to establish their boundaries and to distinguish their members from nonmembers, (b) principles of sovereignty concerning who is in charge, and (c) chains of command delineating responsibilities within the organization."[18] 'Institution' is a broad, encompassing word that does include marriage, law, systems of weights and measures, table manners, money, and firms (and other organizations). Although it would be ideal if there was enough evidence to study a specific monastic Buddhist organization at Sanchi, unfortunately we are left with only trace amount of data that can only describe the institution at work in and around Sanchi.

I analyze institutionalized religion in terms of success, accumulation and mobilization of resources, established authority hierarchy, and network elasticity. The work of sociologist Rodney Stark and his colleagues who have, in various works, studied the rise of early Christianity and the Mormon LDS Church have influenced my definition.[19] Within the field of Buddhist Studies, discussions of domestication as well as

[18] Geoffrey M Hodgson. "What Are Institutions?." *Journal of Economic Issues* XL, no. 1 (2006): 1–25, in particular p. 18. Hodgson is influenced by and in conversation with Douglass North, who famously described institutions as "rules of the game in society or, more formally, are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction… The purpose of the rules is to define the way the game is played." See Douglass C North. *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 3-5.

[19] See Rodney Stark. "Why Religious Movements Succeed or Fail: a Revised General Model." *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 11, no. 2 (1996): 133–46. Two of Stark's books also describe these processes: *The*

settled monasticism have also touched upon these themes.[20] Where Michael Carrithers saw domestication as the fall from a "pure" ideal of renunciation, Ivan Strenski argued that domestication was an inherent part of the *saṁgha* from very early. Domestication, here, may be something close to what I call institutionalized religion. Schopen hinted that the early rise of Mahāyāna groups may have occurred at roughly the same time as the full domestication of the *saṁgha*.[21]

The primary variable as I see it is money in the form of patronage and usage. Without a successful financial setup, any institution can inevitably fail, including and most especially religious ones. The secret to discovering how an institution succeeds lies in investigating its financial history. As such, the study of wealth in Buddhism is something of a paradox considering Buddhism is seen as a religion that privileges renunciation, monasticism, and many solitary virtues. While I do not take issue with these virtues directly, I argue that Buddhism is sometimes misrepresented as *the* religion of asceticism and renunciation *par excellence*. Although those virtues are certainly present in Buddhist literature and practices throughout its impressively long history, without any consideration to the material aspects of sustaining an organization, the group might have been doomed. Generally speaking, they would be homeless, starving, and jobless (assuming monasticism is their vocation). However, when I look at the history of Buddhism, I do not see a rag-tag group of disparate homeless, starving, wandering monks

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Rise of Christianity, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996; *The Rise of Mormonism*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

[20] See Michael Carrithers. "The Modern Ascetics of Lanka and the Pattern of Change in Buddhism." *Man* 14, no. 2 (1979): 294–310; Ivan Strenski. "On Generalized Exchange and the Domestication of the Sangha." *Man* 18, no. 3 (1983): 463–77.

and nuns. Instead, I see a wondrous institution that commissioned beautiful artwork, architecture, literatures, and a plethora of other material *things* that have left a solid imprint on the history of the world. These marvels continue to the present day. With the construction of monastic structures and priestly temples, we see gorgeous works commissioned to house even the most austere of practitioners. I believe that the ancient period, too, similarly saw the construction and valuation of material things ranging from prestige goods to monumental pieces of architecture.

Unfortunately, the complete history of Buddhism can probably never be written because we lack many items that could help us fill in the gaps. For example, we are missing solid biographical data of the Buddha, a history of the religion prior to the ascendancy of Aśoka, and any form of literature before the Common Era that was not a normative monastic text. Despite these shortcomings, scholars have more or less presented a rich history of the religious order according to texts as well as from what little remains preserved in the extant—or nearly extant—material record.[22] Despite this, I do not think the question of how the religious group became such a successful, influential and regionally widespread institution has been asked, let alone answered. This

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[21] See Gregory Schopen. "The Mahāyāna and the Middle Period in Indian Buddhism." *The Eastern Buddhist* 32, no. 2 (2000): 1–25.

[22] One classic history is, of course, Etienne Lamotte. *History of Indian Buddhism*. Translated by Sara Webb-Boin, Louvain: L'institut Orientaliste de Louvain, 1988. More recently, however, we may point to a number of comprehensive overviews of broad topics within the history of ancient Indian Buddhism. Especially noteworthy on this front and particularly relevant to this study is Jason Neelis. *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011. Less relevant, but perhaps still influential (as well as controversial) is Johannes Bronkhorst. *Greater Magadha*, Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007. Studies of individual sites' histories are becoming increasingly strong and have, to some extent, complicated some attempts at creating grander histories such as those cited above. Several exemplary works in this genre are Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*; Shimada, *Early Buddhist Architecture in Context*; Jason DHawkes. "Bharhut." *South Asian Studies* 24, no. 1 (2008): 1–14; Lars Fogelin. *Archaeology of Early*

dissertation hopes to contribute towards this understanding. How did a group of rag-wearing monks who followed the Buddha ever begot an institution that was powerful, rich, and supremely successful inside and outside its original heartland in Magadha? We can never know the exact history of the development of monastic Buddhism as an institution but I believe we can approximate it using material records contextualized with what is known in the literary record.

Essentially, I am arguing that some generation or generations after the Buddha's death the monastic order ingeniously took advantage of opportunities available within a civilization on the brink of something grand, namely urbanization, industrialization (albeit in ancient form), and population surplus.[23] To do so, the burgeoning group of monks and nuns became innovators inside the co-existent realms of religious philosophy and financial security. They harnessed the growing power of the market in the context of economic growth and became the powerful, wealthy, successful institution that we know persists to the present day throughout the world. How did these monks and nuns do this? What was their process? The process was complex but may be presented in three modes that I call the "seeds" leading to institutionalized religion, which I will introduce and discuss in the conclusion (Chapter 6, Section 3). In brief, they are the 1.) advent of

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Buddhism, Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2006; Lisa Owen. *Carving Devotion in the Jain Caves at Ellora*, Leiden: Brill, 2012; Pia Brancaccio. *The Buddhist Caves at Aurangabad*, Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011.

[23] For reference, I can point to a number of landmark studies, especially Frank Raymond Allchin, and George Erdosy. *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. More recently, although primarily a study of religious literatures, and not entirely unproblematic, is Greg Bailey, and Ian Mabbett. *The Sociology of Early Buddhism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Many sentiments found in the late James Heitzman's work may be found throughout this dissertation. Although not always relevant to the Early Historic Period, I must cite several of his miscellaneous laborious works: James Heitzman. *Gifts of Power*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. For Buddhist Studies, his unpublished thesis is particularly instructive: "The Origin and Spread of Buddhist Monastic Institutions in South Asia, 500 BC-300 AD," University of Pennsylvania, 1980.

writing (inscribing, specifically); 2.) charismatic entrepreneurship; 3.) and social complexity. I am unsure if this model may apply to religious institutions beyond Buddhism or not, but the accumulated evidence I have gathered through my research and analysis shows that Buddhism, at the very least, underwent the changes highlighted in this model. Institutionalized religion does not appear out of thin air or over night. In the model, institutionalized religion is dependent on societal developments.

Material Sources

Three types of sources are available for studying early religious history in South Asia. These sources are, in no order of importance, 1.) literary (including foreign works); 2.) archaeological and art historical; and 3.) epigraphic. Unfortunately, there are no known references to Sanchi in any extant South Asian literature prior to the composition of the Sri Lankan *Mahāvaṁsa* and *Dīpavaṁsa*. In these texts, Aśoka's queen and their son Mahinda visit a beautiful monastery outside Vidisha called Cetiyagiri or Vedisagiri (depending on the text). Even if this vague description of a monastic site does refer to Sanchi or one of its surrounding sister sites, both the *Mahāvaṁsa* and the *Dīpavaṁsa* are late texts (perhaps 4th century CE) from an entirely different region. Foreign sources such as Megasthenes's writings, the Periplus, or the very late chinese pilgrims do not mention any monastic site that we may even tentatively identify with Sanchi. The lack of references to Sanchi or its vicinity directly in written literature would lead a researcher relying on only literary sources to overlook Sanchi and its historical importance within the history of Buddhism in India. In this way, Sanchi itself embodies a major problem inherent in studying South Asian religion: the sources are problematic, difficult, and often

non-existent. We know, now, fortunately, that Sanchi is an excellent resource for the study of ancient South Asia because of its monumental archaeology and large epigraphic corpus despite its lack of primary textual references.

The history of South Asia does not suffer from a lack of sources, for there are excellent resources for most eras after the Early Historic Period, including literary, archaeological, epigraphical, foreign traveler reports, and religious texts. However, it seems to be that the earlier the period a researcher desires to investigate the fewer quality sources that are available. Therefore, we might summarize that the sources and other resources available for study in South Asia fall upon three axises: quality, quantity, and time. Unfortunately, though, there is a direct correlation between time and both quality and quantity, making the earliest periods the most difficult to study despite fascinating the early Western colonial researchers the most. Material cultural sources are, unlike textual cultural sources, even more severely affected by the correlation since time is frequently unkind to objects, particularly those built in temporary materials such as wood, thatch, or sand that erodes quickly under the monsoon.

Buddhism is not unique in its limited number of material cultural sources or limited quality of material cultural sources. The archaeology of Hinduism is also plagued with the same types of limitations. Even though the oral textual history of Hinduism dates back to the four Vedas dating back to something around 1,500 BCE, the Vedas do not directly represent any specific period within Indian history. Moreover, there is no Vedic archaeology nor is there, with any certainty, no archaeology of the Upaniṣadic period,

either.[24] These deep oral textual roots do, on the other hand, provide excellent religious, philosophical, and philological data but, as with Buddhism, this kind of data is largely undateable to archaeological periods. The only hope for researchers interested in the material culture of Hinduism is to "try to trace different ritual behaviours which Hindus traditionally associate with Hinduism."[25] Dilip K. Chakrabarti has summarized the position as "a question of looking at the early archaeological record as a whole and pointing out the categories of evidence which make sense from the point of view of the later, well-documented Hinduism." Even though the category of "Hinduism" is itself difficult to assess even in periods where there are substantial amounts of material evidence dating to periods we can easily define, Chakrabarti's point is poignant and represents the general approach toward dealing with eras lacking quality sources.

The archaeological of early Buddhism is likely much better than the archaeology of the Vedic period. Nevertheless, the same problems remain and have persisted in a variety of ways since colonial archaeologists were extremely careless in their unscientific clearing of monuments prior to the turn of the 19th century. As a result, due to the confusion left behind after excavations revealed contradictory evidences (both contradictory to each other and to the well-known textual sources like the Pāli canon), archaeology became the so-called "handmaiden" to religious literature. Jan W. de Jong famously wrote that "Buddhist art, inscriptions and coins [are unable to be] understood

[24] The argument is summarized and made persuasively in Dilip K Chakrabarti "The Archaeology of Hinduism." In *Archaeology and World Religion*, edited by Timothy Insoll, 33–60, London and New York: Tourledge, 2001.
[25] Chakrabarti, "The Archaeology of Hinduism," p. 35.

without the support given by the texts"[26] since it is textual evidence that was considered to be original or "early" while archaeological evidence was an aberration or perhaps even degenerative.[27] Since the 19th century, on the other hand, such convictions have been overturned and the value of archaeological sources has been variously emphasized by archaeologists, philologists, and historians alike. Despite the well-known utility of material cultural sources during the 20th and now 21st centuries, though, the sources themselves are still under-studied, lost, or not available, which has led to some controversies over holy sites like Kapilavastu or Lumbini or over dating historical events like the date of the Buddha's birth or death or the date of the first council. In the end, it may turn out to be more fruitful to move away from attempting to verify textual events and let the data, however much is available, speak for itself without such strict confines. The study of the life of the Buddha materially typifies the problem since there is only evidence of the Buddha's life in extant textual sources that post-date the Buddha's life by at least a hundred or more years. The archaeology of sites purported to be associated with the Buddha's narrative has yielded almost no Buddhist material at all, which has further sent the discussion down the rabbit-hole since that indicates either excavators are looking in the wrong places, in the wrong stratigraphic layers, or that the evidence simply does not exist at all.[28]

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[26] Jan de Jong. "The Study of Buddhism." In *Studies in Indo-Asian Art and Culture No. 4*, edited by P Ratnam. Problems and Perspectives, New Delhi, 1975, p. 15.

[27] Robin Coningham. "Buddhism 'Rematerialized' and the Archaeology of the Gautama Buddha." *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 8 (1998): 121–26, p. 121.

[28] For a review of this data, see first Herbert Härtel. "The Archaeological Research on Buddhist Sites." In *The Dating of the Historical Buddha*, edited by Heinz Bechert, 61–89, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991. For a review of the phenomenon in general, see Robin Coningham. "The Archaeology of

Further problems exist even when there is excellent material evidence. For example, defining what monuments are of which type is an interesting and longstanding problem. Some scholars argue that there are something along the lines of at least 20 types of Buddhist structures while Debala Mitra, Raymond Allchin, Dilip K. Chakrabarti, and Robin Coningham place most monuments within a tripartite division (*stūpa*-s, *gṛha*-s, and *vihāra*-s).[29] The first of the three primary types of monuments is the *stūpa*. Even though *stūpa*-s are easily identifiable once they are reconstructed, often the new discovery of an archaeological site yields only a pile of rubble where a *stūpa* may have once stood. Moreover, *stūpa*-s were frequently built on top of other structures, making their identification even more difficult during excavation. Beyond the sheer identification of a *stūpa* structure there is the question of the proper association of the *stūpa* since other śramaṇic traditions like Jainism also utilized hemispherical votive or burial mounds.

Also relevant to this dissertation are the *vihāra*-s. The earliest periods of Buddhism that are identifiable from the extant material record are devoid of *vihāra*-s except for the small chambers identified at cave sites along the Western Deccan like Karle and Bedsa. Free-standing *vihāra*-s do not become common until the Kuṣāṇa period. Even though the *saṁgha* is a frequent subject for historical inquiries into Indian Buddhism—as it is primarily here as well—there is precious little evidence for the existence of monks or nuns of any kind.[30] It is possible and certainly very likely that the monks and nuns lived in impermanent shelters or in nearby makeshift cave sanctuaries but a puzzling question

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Buddhism." In *Archaeology and World Religion*, edited by Timothy Insoll, 61–95, London and New York: Routledge, 2001, pp. 65-66.

[29] For references, see Coningham, "The Archaeology of Buddhism," p. 70.

remains for both art historians, textual scholars, and archaeologists alike: where are the monks and nuns in pictorial images dating to Before the Common Era? From inscriptions like those at Sanchi we know that there did exist some category of renunciants since many donors self-identify as *bhikkhu*-s or *bhikkhunī*-s. But beyond what is mentioned in these inscriptions and what is mentioned in the extant textual sources, little can be said of their existence, let alone their beliefs, practices, hierarchies, and interactions with non-renunciants. If previous generations of excavators had carefully examined, cultivated, and stored soil from archaeological sites we might know more about these people even at the biological level since a diet would go far in explaining daily practices and potential beliefs. Unfortunately, soil and faunal remains were mostly thrown out when the sites were first examined in the 19th and 20th centuries, disallowing future studies delving into the earliest stratigraphic layers.[31]

Even though this dissertation is not a strict exploration of Sanchi's total material cultural corpus, it does focus on the largest body of data (epigraphy) that avoids many of the orienting problems discussed above. In section 1.3 below I unpack my own epigraphic approach and examine how it fits into some current methodological trends. Many of the same questions remain: what do we do with large gaps in our knowledge base? How do we make educated speculations about the actors emerging within our data with a limited amount of total data? My scholarly goal centers on patronage at Sanchi but admittedly the limitations discussed above, below, and throughout make such an

[30] For a discussion of *stūpa*-s, *gṛha*-s, and *vihāra*-s along with references, see Coningham, "The Archaeology of Buddhism," pp. 70-80.
[31] Here I am simply reiterating Coningham's argument. For sources and discussion, see Coningham, "The Archaeology of Buddhism," p. 88.

examination difficult, thus I will only seek to define, describe and analyze patronage at Sanchi according to what the data itself is able to provide. I do speculate as it pertains to some larger aspects of patronage, monumentality, and monasticism at Sanchi, such as who was *actually* in charge (I argue there was a hierarchy of monastics), what *actually* was exchanged between donor and donee (I argue that it was likely either money or prestige goods), and what implications patronage had for the development of the Buddhist institution in the region. As usual with most scholarly inquiries, there is never enough evidence and what meager evidence we do have must be cautiously contextualized.

1.3 AN EPIGRAPHIC APPROACH

Theoretical Obstacles

To date, many scholars throughout the 20th and 21st centuries have variously found epigraphy useful for their investigations of Indian religion. For instance, the edicts of Aśoka continue to be revisited for their vast socio-political value in addition to their value as records of kingly patronage. Buddhism as a specific religion has received a great deal of attention during the earlier periods because of the vast number of donative epigraphic records, like those at Sanchi, or permanent endowment records like those found in many Western Deccan cave sites. Elsewhere, medieval eulogistic inscriptions, land-grants, and Hindu temple endowment inscriptions have been extensively mined, collected, studied, and speculated upon. However, even though inscriptions persisted throughout ancient South Asia for more than a thousand years, it is difficult to consider the source of

knowledge we call "epigraphy" as a monolithic mass that can easily be read together. I view epigraphy much in the same way philologists might view manuscripts. Manuscripts all possess different scripts and unique handwriting styles, different writing apparatuses, and different document canvases. Moreover, the ideological goals of manuscripts are frequently unique as well. Similarly, inscriptions all possess unique traits that may be best compared and contrasted with other inscriptions of the same style and/or genre.

With all that being said, there has been little transparency about the way in which scholars utilize inscriptions for historical inquiry. Beyond the process of being often studied as monolithic entities, there are additional, persistent problems with the use of inscriptions as a historical source which should be addressed. First, as I alluded to in the previous paragraph, there are many distinct genres of inscriptions, the differences of which are infrequently mentioned. Richard Salomon's comprehensive survey book on Indian epigraphy[32] lists ten types: 1.) Royal and panegyric inscriptions[33] (*praśasti*-s); 2.) land grant charters;[34] 3.) private donations;[35] 4.) memorial donations;[36] 5.) labeling inscriptions;[37] 6.) pilgrim and traveler records;[38] 7.) cultic inscriptions;[39] 8.) literary inscriptions;[40] 9.) mercantile seal and sealing inscriptions;[41] and 10.) misc. inscriptions.[42] Primarily, the inscriptional genre relevant at Sanchi and other early Indian Buddhist sites

[32] Richard Salomon. *Indian Epigraphy*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
[33] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 110-113.
[34] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 113-115.
[35] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 118-119.
[36] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 119-120.
[37] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 120-121.
[38] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 121-122.
[39] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 122-123.
[40] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, p. 123.
[41] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 123-124.
[42] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 124-126.

are what Salomon calls "private donations." Also commonly called just "donative inscriptions" by other scholars for much of the past century, especially with regard to the Buddhist inscriptions at places like Sanchi, private donations are nearly always religious in nature and are numerous compared to other genres.[43] Salomon has called private donative inscriptions "less formal" than most royal *praśasti*-s. Nearly always, these inscriptions are small endowments to institutions for the sake of repairs, maintenance, and construction of smaller physical features like water tanks, images, or *stūpa*-s, although some may record perpetual endowments. The features and utility of private donative epigraphs will be discussed at length in Chapter 3. For the sake of scholarly study, it is necessary to be completely forward about which genre or genres of inscriptions any given investigation is utilizing. Otherwise, it is very easy for the research to get muddled in the mixed intentions of the original author(s) since not every inscription was intended to do the same kinds of work or give the same kinds of agency to its originator(s). Although it is certainly possible to read genres together, especially with regard to philological concerns, the blanket application of mixed inscriptional genres risks conflating the historical values of individual inscriptions or groups of inscriptions.

A second pitfall which may be common in epigraphic studies is the romanticization of inscriptions. Like the study of any genre of any text, the intention of the author of a text should always be confronted and analyzed. Unfortunately, many times

[43] Although this is not always the case. At the Early Historic Period site of Bandhogarh is a group of private donations recording the gifts of merchants only. There is little that could be called religious about these inscriptions other than the fact that their style was likely derived from the same styled donations at Sanchi and elsewhere. It is also possible that they were donations to a small religious site that has now vanished. See Ranabir Chakravarti. "Merchants and Other Donors at Ancient Bandhogarh." *South Asian Studies* 11, no. 1 (1995): 33–41.

the intention or purpose of an inscription, particularly private donative inscriptions like those we find at Sanchi, is misconstrued as an actual record or reflection into "*documented activities of real individuals* rather than to the normative ideals prevalent in much of the contemporary literature."[44] Further, within the field of Buddhist Studies at least, this type of romanticization has spawned some of the most fruitful—and most maligned—forays into early Buddhist history of the past several decades.[45] One quote from Gregory Schopen's famous 1991 article "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism[46]" neatly summarizes this misinformed perspective as it pertains to early Buddhist sources:

> There was, and is, a large body of archaeological and epigraphical material, material which can be reasonably well located in time and space,' material that is largely "unedited" and much of which was never intended to be "read." This material records or reflects at least a part of what Buddhists—both laypeople and monks—actually practiced and believed.[47]

To defend his point, Schopen said in a footnote that, "on the curious fact [that many inscriptions were never intended to be "read"]… a considerable number of Buddhist inscriptions were never intended to be seen."[48] To Schopen, then, since inscriptions were somehow different than textual manuscripts in that their intended audience was considerably smaller (or even non-existent), they did not "inculcate an ideal" of the normative monastic institution, as textual manuscripts tended to do.

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[44] Cynthia Talbot. *Precolonial India in Practice: Society, Region, and Identity in Medieval Andhra*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 11, emphasis mine.

[45] See, for example, the work of Gregory Schopen contained within the book of collected essays called *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997, which frequently makes use of Buddhist inscriptions with little methodological discussion about how they are being deployed.

[46] Gregory Schopen. "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism." *History of Religions* 31, no. 1 (1991): 1–23.

[47] Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions," pp. 1-2.

On the other hand, private donations do leave us some information to be studied, such as dates, names, sociological or demographic details, personal accomplishments, etc., which should not be downplayed. Nevertheless, despite the diverse and unique datasets that private donative epigraphs contribute to the historical record,[49] they can easily be relied upon too heavily to provide "real actions" of "real individuals," at least for the specific genre this dissertation is concerned with. For most genres, however, it may be true that the information extracted from the inscriptions may be the only information scholars may ever obtain about those persons, thus skewing the importance of that data to the point where it is a slippery slope between "good" and "only" information available.

Cynthia Talbot's 2001 book used Hindu temple inscriptions from Andhra Pradesh in a detailed reinvestigation of social identity in precolonial India. There she wrote extensively about her own methodological deployment of epigraphy, which remains one of the most coherent and self-aware academic examples of sources and their limitations. One of her most valuable observations was that,

> …we must not forget that inscriptions are also literary texts of a particular type. Although they record certain past activities of interest to us, they do so in ways that were meaningful and useful to their contemporary audience. Inscriptions, just like medieval court literature, are forms of discourse containing representations of the self and the world. As such, the social and political aspirations they embody must be recognized along with the ideology they convey. The study of inscriptional rhetoric and style is virtually in its infancy, and much more consideration is needed regarding the conditions of inscriptional production and their intended audiences.[50]

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[48] Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions," p. 2, fn. 2.
[49] See Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice,* p. 12 for a discussion.
[50] Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice*, p. 15.

Indeed, Talbot's words assist in deconstructing the problems of inscriptional genres and romanticization. Even though Aśoka's edicts are wonderful sources that provide completely unique insights into his era, they are still, fundamentally, like monastic texts that Schopen criticized, written "texts" that "inculcate" an ideal, which is not difficult to locate given that Aśoka's edicts are panegyric. Similarly, although belonging to a different genre altogether, the Sanchi private donative epigraphs do similar work in that they "inculcate" the donor ideal, which we know from textual sources in Buddhism is a poignant form of devotional practice. In the same spirit, Talbot also rightly argued that "inscriptions provide specific contexts of time and place that are lacking in many literary texts from the medieval period."

Beyond these two major potential pitfalls plaguing the use of inscriptions in many academic studies, there is another elephant in the room which should be addressed. Much has traditionally been said about the text of the inscriptions, meaning their written content, their audience, and their relationship to other texts, whether they are literary or inscriptional. However, little has said by Schopen or other scholars who utilize inscriptions about the material life of the inscriptional texts. Again, following Cynthia Talbot's work, I argue that another difficult avenue to pursue when studying inscriptions is ignoring the fact that inscriptions themselves are material cultural products and may be effectively studied similar to how archaeologists analyze artifacts.

Talbot suggested, that "[b]ecause inscriptions are materially embodied records of practice, we can… [plot them] on a space and time grid, not only individually but also en

masse."[51] She calls a corpus of inscriptions, like what we have at Sanchi and elsewhere, an "archaeological assemblage" that have unique properties that may only express themselves once they are analyzed for patterns.[52] In short, like artifacts, when the inscriptional corpus is large, "the sum of the whole is greater than the individual parts, because components are revealed when, and only when, the entire complex is analyzed."[53] While I wholeheartedly agree with Talbot's assertion, I also acknowledge that there is substantial value in analyzing separate, isolated sets of inscriptions or even individual inscriptions by themselves, which might be heavily dependent on the questions being asked of the inscriptional corpus. In this dissertation, I have attempted to take both approaches in subsequent chapters.

A Postmodern Approach

One powerful voice in the conversation regarding the use of South Asian epigraphy and "letting the inscriptions speak for themselves" has been Daud Ali.[54] He once summarized that the study of inscriptions in the nineteenth century might be understood in two distinct ways, both of which I discussed above. The first way falls within the realm of philology,

[51] See Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice*, p. 13.

[52] Further, she advocates, "not simply mean that we should examine large numbers of inscriptions. That is valuable, of course, in order to eliminate the obvious errors of ascribing uniqueness to what is common or, conversely, interpreting an unusual situation as representative. But it is also of critical importance that an entire body of material be studied for patterns of interrelated phenomena. A case in point is my classification of medieval Andhra temples into two basic types, the major and the minor. Although the primary criterion is the number of endowments received by a temple, a cluster of accompanying variables-the identity of the donor, location of the temple, and nature of the gift object-divide along similar lines. When we find such clusters of traits or interconnected patterns, we have identified an important nexus in the dynamic configuration of people and events that comprised a society. In other words, the subjectivity of a researcher's judgment can be tempered by searching for intertwined features and parallel or intersecting trends." Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice,* pp. 13-14.

[53] Here Talbot (p. 13) is following Evsen Neustupny. *Archaeological Method*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 26.

[54] Daud Ali. "Royal Eulogy as World History." In *Querying the Medieval*, edited by Ronald Inden, Jonathan Walters, and Daud Ali, 165–229, Oxford; New York, 2000.

which utilized inscriptions only insofar as they reflected "alien" or "dead" languages. Ali said, "[i]ntegral to this will to knowledge was the presupposition, taken up by scientific linguistics, that language was a closed system of monologic utterances that humans passively understood."[55] The second way inscriptions were understood in the nineteenth century was as a constituent of archaeology. Ali powerfully argued that "[a]rchaeology sought to represent the past not for mimicry but instead for spectacle: to give the past all the qualities of an object."[56] Both methods fell under the scouring eye of Europeans, particularly the British, in India.

Ali's core argument is that "inscriptions in India have not had the privilege of feeling the tremors that have shifted the ground in interpretive practices over the last hundred years in Indology…" Further, Ali hints at the romanticism I outlined above by invoking LaCapra's observation that inscriptions have been treated in a "documentary" fashion, "as if they were simple self-disclosing objects."[57] Unlike other religious texts, inscriptions—at least the eulogistic inscriptions Ali was concerned with in his chapter—have been unable to move beyond the "documentary" style readings of the colonialist Indologists. Rather, inscriptions as a source for study remained "underdeveloped"[58] because of their existence in the "empiricist framework." Ali, along with much of the work of Sheldon Pollock to some extent, attempted to reconfigure what makes up a "text" and whether inscriptions are documents or texts by themselves. For Ali, inscriptions—

[55] Ali, "Royal Eulogy as World History," p. 165.
[56] Ali, "Royal Eulogy as World History," p. 166.
[57] Ali, "Royal Eulogy as World History," p. 166, citing Dominick LaCapra. *Rethinking Intellectual History*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983, pp. 23-71.
[58] Talbot also discussed the under-developed methodologies. See Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice*, p. 13.

and he certainly means his eulogistic inscriptions from medieval India—are texts with their own histories and inter-textualities. Inscriptional texts, then, are not just "sources" from which we may extract information but are alive and dialogical. As Talbot astutely noted, the "tangible physical presence of inscriptions can easily dupe the historian into treating them as if they were neutral transmitters of facts from the past to the present."[59] The dialogical approach of Ali assists in removing the so-called "positivistic" tendency to objectively "extract" history and instead emphasizes active inter-textualities. For instance, he said, "language and knowledge [are] ontologically continuous with their contexts, within which they exist in complicated relationships (of agreement, contestation, parody, and so on.)."[60] Inscriptions function as "supplemental" to the world rather than as "reflective" and thus have a multi-layered reality. Such an argument has complicated implications for this dissertation, since I am sympathetic to Ali's ideas and critiques. Nevertheless, it is difficult to apply his argument wholesale simply because the inscriptions he studied and derived his methodology from are completely different from the Sanchi epigraphic corpus.

Not only are Daud Ali's inscriptions much later, they are vastly different in their content and genre. His eulogistic inscriptions are products of a different cultural era which had entirely different purposes for recording inscriptions in the first place. The Buddhist inscriptions at Sanchi are private, donative inscriptions that are short, vague, and oddly possess limited "inter-textuality" with other sets of inscriptions since they mostly refer to a roster of donors scarcely seen elsewhere, except for at concurrently

[59] Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice*, p. 14.

constructed Buddhist sites of the same time period. In brief, the Buddhist inscriptions at Sanchi represent an era of inscriptional textuality that was in its infancy. As I argue in this dissertation, the Sanchi era does, however, when unpacked and analyzed for its various nuances, represent a time when religious professionals seemed to have gradually began to realize the power of the written word, publicly and privately. By the time of Ali's medieval period inscriptions, religious professionals along with other kinds of professionals had not only "learned" how to correctly deploy inscriptions for the benefit of their agenda, but also how to effectively communicate, display, write, and use the inscribed word. Where Ali's perspective is useful to my investigation is in his advocation to let the inscriptions speak for themselves as texts and not as pure windows into the romantic past.

If inscriptions also suffer from many of the same problems that textual manuscripts do, then what is to be done? One obvious solution is to incorporate both epigraphy and literature into a scholarly exploration of the past, since both types of texts are different sides to the same coin.[61] While this sentiment is generally well-received and offers a diverse solution to a fundamental problem with the history of religions, it implies that there is either a one-for-one correlation between literary genres and inscriptional genres and/or a one-for-one solution to common problems existing in both types of texts—which just is not always true. For instance, donative inscriptions do not have

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[60] Ali, "Royal Eulogy as World History," p. 166.
[61] Jonathan Walters. "Stūpa, Story, and Empire." In *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia*, edited by Juliane Schober, 160–94. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997, p. 161. Talbot, *Precolonial India in Practice*, echoes this sentiment, p. 16.

manuscript cousins, although something like administrative receipts or bank records might be very close thematically; however, they are hundreds or more years apart.

For datasets like the ones we have at Sanchi, it is extremely easy to become enthralled with the roster of patrons and romanticize them too far into the data to use it as an descriptive and/or explanatory dataset for an entire period and entire geographical range of Early Historic Period Buddhists. Beyond a romanticized reading of the Sanchi corpus, a more conservative approach, like the one I attempt to take throughout this dissertation, attempts to let the epigraphy speak for itself and limit the number of inferences we can make by reading between the lines. Therefore, it is necessary to creatively analyze the data together as a mass and separate as individuals to extract as much information as possible to draw some conclusions at all, as preliminary as they might be, since these could be the only conclusions we can ever know about this group of patrons at Sanchi (and elsewhere in the vicinity).

Inscriptions as Colophons

One final comment about the use of inscriptions shapes my overarching perspective. When thinking about the nature of a donative inscription at Sanchi—which exists in a strange intermediary space as written text, a material text, a historical document, and a piece of artwork—it is difficult if not impossible to separate, visually or theoretically, the inscription from its surrounding landscape. In the case of Sanchi, the surrounding landscape is a series of monumental pieces of architectures, namely the *stūpa*-s, the *vedikā*-s, the *toraṇa*-s, the *vihāra*-s, and even the upright columns, the freestanding statues, and other miscellaneous features. Sanchi as an archaeological site fits the well-

known archaeological model for a site operating as a statement of power, wealth, and authority as archaeologists Elizabeth DeMarrais, Luis Jaime Castillo, and Timothy Earle designated in their masterful 1996 article "Ideology, Materialization, and Power Strategies."[62] There they argued that "[w]ritten documents, such as inscribed stelae or monuments, legal documents, contracts, and stories, are physical manifestations of belief systems and, like other means of materialized ideology, may tell a story, legitimate a claim, or transmit a message."[63] They continue, "[d]ocuments can formalize rules and relationships set out by those in power. In written religions, texts encode scriptures, prayers, and ritual traditions, standardizing these messages to allow their dissemination and adoption over a broad region."[64] They cite inscriptions from the Indian Vijayanagara empire as examples for when inscriptions recorded the generosity of elites for strategic control.[65] Again, as with other inscriptional corpuses mentioned by scholars cited in this section, the Vijayanagara imperial inscriptions are of a completely different genre. Regardless, however, the point of DeMarrais, et. al, is that monumental architectural landscapes, and any inscriptions written therein, are examples of materialized power strategies. How, then, should a scholar separate the inscriptional corpus from the monumental architectural corpus? I argue that one cannot because the inscriptions themselves are an intimate piece of that material text, thus when looking at the Sanchi inscriptions we must also consider—however preliminarily—the purpose and ideological

[62] Elizabeth DeMarrais, Juis Jaime Castillo, and Timothy Earle. "Ideology, Materialization, and Power Strategies." *Current Anthropology* 37, no. 1 (1996): 15–31.
[63] DeMarrais, et. al., "Ideology, Materialization, and Power Strategies," p. 19.
[64] DeMarrais, et. al., "Ideology, Materialization, and Power Strategies," p. 19.
[65] They continue (p. 19) by arguing that "[i]n early literate societies, the technologies of writing, including engraving skills and ink and paper manufacture, could be manipulated by elites."

design at work around the inscription(s). To do so, I invoke a concept borrowed from manuscript studies: colophons.

If we are able to consider inscriptions as colophons to the material cultural text that is the monumental architecture at a given site, like Sanchi, we may be able to adequately compensate for the severe lack of overall evidence from which to draw conclusions. By defining, describing, and analyzing the inscriptions at Sanchi I seek to highlight the overarching phenomenon of patronage as it manifested within the Sanchi vicinity. Although it is virtual guarantee that the inscribed records of donation are only a fragment of the true number of donors who funded the monuments, I take the information available as a representative sampling. The inscriptional text functions as a type of added text on the margins of the "primary" text, like a colophon does to a manuscript.[66] Colophons may include additional information from the author(s), subsequent commentators, grammarians, publisher's marks, or even artistic designs. Since inscriptions, especially private donative inscriptions like those at Sanchi, are markings added after the initial construction of the site, their function, placement, and use is reminiscent of manuscript colophons in that they add additional information to the primary "text" (the manuscript). Similarly, a visitor or pilgrim to a place like Sanchi may understand or "read" the Sanchi monumental architecture without being able to actually read the donative inscriptional records (most likely because the *brāhmī* script is difficult

[66] Not to be confused with actual manuscript colophons, what I am arguing here is that the inscriptions are the added material to the monumental architectures. However, there are inscriptions that do possess actual colophons, just like manuscripts. Commonly this happened with *praśasti*-s or other kinds of panegyric inscriptions. See Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, p. 235.

and inaccessible and the Prakrit language is awkward and not standardized compared to post-Pāṇinian grammatical Sanskrit).

Such a switch in lens when viewing an inscriptional corpus allows, at least according to my perspective, us to largely avoid the major pitfalls I described above (conflating genres, romanticization, disregarding the materiality of the texts, and over-stating their documentary power). Furthermore, cultivating the inscriptions-as-colophons lens facilitates an understanding that the inscriptions should be taken at face-value in that they are what we make of them. Rather than viewing them as silver bullets yielding truthful information of an objective past, they are features within a complicated, tangled web of material and textual inter-textuality.

1.4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Early Agriculture and Urbanism

Like the development of agriculture in the rest of the world, domestication of plants and animals led to sophisticated, urban society which in turn was able to establish self-sustaining cultural institutions, like religion. In each corner of the world a different type of agricultural production sprang up that began the process. From Central Asia, the domestication of the horse and, later, camel gave rise to a horse-based society of around 3,000 BCE onwards.[67] In and around the ancient Mediterranean came einkorn, emmer,

[67] Archaeologists and historians mostly agree that there is no single cause or event that led to the domestication of plants and animals. Ian Hodder. *Entangled*, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012, p. 203. Nor was there any choice or intent involved. Rather, the first plant domestication did not happen intentionally and happened over a large time-frame. Dorian Q Fuller, Robin G Allaby, and Chris Stevens. "Domestication as Innovation." *World Archaeology* 42, no. 1 (2010): 13–28. When it did occur, people's dependence upon material *things* caused their entanglement in previously unseen contexts like population growth, sedentary life, and care-taking of land and animal. Each of these contexts necessitated the

barley, pea, lentil, and cattle. The Indian subcontinent saw the growth of wheat, barley, rice, cotton, jujube, sheep, and goat from approximately 9,000 BCE. Eventually the water buffalo was domesticated by 2,500 BCE if not sooner.[68] Each played a vital role in shaping society, its core principles, its imports and exports, and its religious belief systems. Without such domestications, the spatial expansion and population increase in humans would not have been possible, thus delaying the establishment of permanent settlements and evolution of technologically innovative societies.[69]

Mehrgarh in present day Pakistan was an extremely lush vegetational area suited to people transforming from hunter/gatherers to farmers. Mehrgarh began to be inhabited

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invention of new devices (and indeed mechanisms to properly utilize these devices). Farmers, unlike hunter-gatherers, had to divide their labor into more demanding food-production regimes. Culturally intensive 'tipping points' (see Hodder, p. 204) also brought about consequences such as the creation of rules, laws, and rights to control resources (Fuller, Allaby, Stevens, p. 23).

[68] Anil K. Gupta, "Origin of Agriculture and Domestication of Plants and Animals Linked to Early Holocene Climate Amelioration." *Current Science* 87, no. 1 (2004): 54–59.

[69] Gupta, "Origin of Agriculture and Domestication of Plants and Animals Linked to Early Holocene Climate Amelioration," p. 54. But what was so beneficial about the permanent switch to agriculture over the efficient hunter-gatherer system? On the surface, it seems problematic since it requires longer hours, leads to more disease (such as tooth-decay and viral outbreaks given that people lived much closer together). Lewis-Williams and Pearce provide two possible suggestions: 1.) climate change and 2.) rising populations. Since droughts intensified, the availability of food became scarce, thus leading to the need to create more efficient food-production methodologies. The first farmers were reacting rationally and naturally to the problem at hand and could therefore tackle two problems simultaneously. David Lewis-Williams, and David Pearce. *Inside the Neolithic Mind*, London: Thames & Hudson, 2005, p. 20ff. Starch-filled diets changed individual health. "All in all, agriculture and its consequences were not an unmitigated success," observed Lewis-Williams and Pearce. The very same process happened with the domestication of animals as well since many animals lived in herds naturally they were easy to control with little effort. The consequences of animal domestication, however, "interfered with the natural patterns of breeding and genetic change," (Lewis and Williams, p. 22). One answer to the question of why humans would want to domesticate plants and animals, given the multitude of problems associated with such apparent "progress" was that it was labor-saving, see Arnold J Toynbee *A Study of History*. Edited by D C Somervell, New York: Oxford University Press, 1947. An alternative answer was that domestication benefitted the herds as well since corralling them allowed the animals to be purposely bred and culled when necessary to strengthen the animals physically and genetically. Cauvin argued that labour-saving is a fantastic Western obsession in Jacques Cauvin. *The Birth of the Gods and the Origins of Agriculture*. Translated by Trevor Watkins, Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000. In my view, the development of agriculture and domestication of animals closely parallels the development of religious institutions since both phenomenons required human ingenuity and cooperation to construct something completely new for the sake of efficiency and collectivism.

approximately 7,000 BCE and began the permanent habitation of a region which would go on to become known in the 20th century as the Indus Valley civilization. The Indus Valley, also sometimes called the Harappan civilization, oversaw the first developments of technologies, like irrigation and animal-drawn ploughs, and cultural values, such as pastoralism, that permeated all throughout the rest of the subcontinent. Mehrgarh began to lose its centrality around 5,500 BCE just as another region along the Indus river rose to power. The early Harappan phase began shortly thereafter.

"Mature Harappan" culture dates to approximately 2,200 BCE through 1,900 BCE.[70] Several characteristics of the Indus-Saraswati river culture are indicative of its urbanization. Despite not being able to read the writing system[71] recorded on mercantile seals, archaeologists have worked to uncover an impressive amount of data on the culture and organizational aspects of Indus-Saraswati society. For instance, the people who lived in the larger urban settlements such as Mohenjo-Daro in Sindh or Harappa in the Punjab would have experienced a relatively lavish lifestyle. We now know about extensive city planning that resulted in the development of wells and reservoirs, city walls and

[70] See Jonathan Mark Kenoyer. "The Indus Civilisation." In *The Cambridge World Prehistory*, edited by Colin Renfrew and Paul Bahn, 407–32, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014 for the most general, comprehensive description of the Indus-Saraswati river tradition. Of course, traditionally one might refer to this civilization as only the "Indus" tradition but recent work done on the now dried-up river Saraswati shows that the entire breadth of the culture spanned between and indeed beyond the two rivers (p. 407).

[71] For the sake of brevity I will deliberately omit a survey of attempts to decode the script. No bi-or-tri-lingual "Rosetta Stone" presently exists for the script and as such the translation eludes modern day scholarship which has attempted to link the language to Sanskrit, Dravidian, or other language groups. Nevertheless, it should suffice to say only that the decoding of the script would only likely lead to more questions since the data provided by the seals may only be short, pithy inscriptional records of names and possibly places. Linguistically, it would, of course, be a gold mine since scholars could finally understand the complex migrations to and from the South Asian subcontinent. Although it would be an invaluable asset to the study of South Asian cultural traditions, such as religion, any present attempt to link the religion of the Indus-Saraswati culture to the religion of Early Historic Period Indian religion is potentially dangerous

gateways, internal and external trade of prestige goods to and from places such as the Mediterranean region, craft specialization, fishing, diverse crop growing, and arts and (probably) religions.[72] All these high-technologies and cultural productions would have afforded the people a comfortable lifestyle with a healthy, diverse diet, intellectual challenges, and fascinating cross-cultural interactions. Curiously, because of climate shifts[73] and an ever-persistent migration of peoples, cultures, and traditions from Central Asia and the Middle East, the Indus-Saraswati civilization declined and took with it widespread urbanization until around the 5th century BCE. Such a transition between periods has been much discussed and widely politicized but remains largely unexplained. The transition between the Indus-Saraswati and the Early Historic Period periods in South Asian history marks an enormous shift in the available sources to investigate the past as does the composition of texts in Sanskrit and Middle Indic. By and large, studies of the Vedic, Vedantic, Upaniṣadic, and Classical Sanskritic literatures comprise most existing scholarship pertaining to historic India. It is also during the Early Historic Period where the first large-scale evidence for religious culture begins to appear. With regard to the earliest extant evidence, Sanchi's enormous corpus of epigraphic material is the largest and earliest[74] from which we may obtain a glimpse of the individual persons

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to the politics of religion more broadly since such a linkage would be entirely speculative without any substantive evidence.

[72] Population increase, settlement stability, widespread domestication of plants and animals set the foundation for the first cities. In these large, sedentary settlements were complex divisions of labor and professional specializations. Organizational messiness is a vital component to human development as is the progressive tidying of that mess. Hodder, *Entangled*, p. 201.

[73] V N. Misra. "Climate: a Factor in the Rise and Fall of the Indus Civilization - Evidence From Rajasthan and Beyond" In *The Lost Sarasvati and the Indus Civilization*, edited by S P Gupta, 125–71, Jodhpur: Kusumanjali Prakashan, 1995 provides a brief summary.

[74] Even though Bharhut's corpus of inscriptions undoubtedly dates earlier than most if not all of Sanchi's epigraphy, the site is no longer in-situ. Moreover, Bharhut contained approximately one-third of the total

whom the Buddhists interacted with for the sake of financing reliquary monuments. As discussed below, it is no coincidence that Sanchi appears at a crucial crossroads between a number of large urban centers, many of which became economic nodes tapped for their patronage.

Early Historic Period Urbanism in Central India

Despite the lack of firm dating of much Sanskrit and Middle Indic literature,[75] much of what we know about early Buddhism is through that literature. Archaeological and epigraphical sources complement the literature by providing different kinds of evidences. Read together, both types of sources may be used to construct a thorough history. The urbanization of the South Asian subcontinent beginning around the 6th century BCE framed the primary context in which the śramaṇic religious traditions emerged. As such, we may tentatively place the start of the Early Historic Period in the 6th century BCE to

number of inscriptions as found at Sanchi. Nearly half of Bharhut's inscriptions are not donative in nature, either, as they are short labeling inscriptions. For labeling inscriptions and a broad discussion of the art and inscriptions at Bharhut, see Vidya Dehejia. *Discourse in Early Buddhist Art,* Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1997. Some recent discoveries from Sannati/Kanaganahalli provide us with some comparison. See Vidya Dehejia. "Questioning Narrativity and Inscribed Labels." In *Sacred Landscapes in Asia*, edited by Himanshu Prabha Ray, 285–308. New Delhi, 2007.

[75] Even though dating is usually constrained to several century time-spans, approximate geographic locations of Vedic texts has been, actually, well-studied and documented. See Michael Witzel. "On the Localisation of Vedic Texts and Schools." In *India and the Ancient World*, edited by Gilbert Pollet and Pierre Herman Leonard Eggermont, 173–213, Leuven, 1987. A fairly general relative timeline of the layers of Vedic texts has been established and known for perhaps a century with slight modifications every decade or so. Some texts in the relative chronology do probably post-date some early Buddhist literature. Michael Witzel outlines some useful chronologies and relationships in Michael Witzel. "Moving Targets?" *Indo-Iranian Journal* 52 (2009): 287–310. The earliest Buddhist texts were undoubtedly composed in northern India, namely in the Magadha and Kosala kingdoms. However, it is very clear that they have been redacted many times over the centuries, especially since they were maintained orally until probably the 1st century BCE. The words of the Buddha were probably translated into other languages soon after his death, resulting in the first layers that we now have access to, such as the Pāli *Pāṭimokkha*. Schopen has highlighted Vinaya rules that show how to compensate for memory loss. See Gregory Schopen. "If You Can't Remember, How to Make It Up." In *Buddhist Monks and Business Matters*, 395–407. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004, although with a word of caution that Schopen himself emphasizes that the Vinaya is relatively young. Additionally, introductory phrases in Buddhist texts are a well-known problem. For this, see Oskar von

reflect the sudden increase in reliable sources, both textual and archaeological.[76] Additionally, common ceramic wares found at extant sites throughout the subcontinent greatly assist in relative dating. Northern Black Polished Ware ranges from c. 500 BCE to 100 BCE, Russet Coated Painted Ware from c. 300 BCE to 200 CE, Rouletted Ware from c. 150 BCE to sometime in the Common Era, and Southern Black-and-Red Ware from c. 1000 BCE to 400 CE.[77] The 6th century BCE is also when rampant iron use may be traced in the historical record, especially in tools such as axes and plough.[78] The so-called "second urbanization" in South Asia did not occur in a vacuum but rather happened gradually over time. No single root cause may acceptably explain the decline and eventual rise of urbanization.[79] What is known, however, is that a number of factors, such as the introduction of iron and increased contact with foreign powers such as Greece, contributed to sedentary permanent settlements from which the great cities of Early Historic Period India arose.

The fruit of urbanization were economic and political aggregation.[80] The Pāli Aṅguttara Nikāya names sixteen *mahā-janapada*-s,[81] or 'major states'[82] along with their

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Hinüber. "Hoary Past and Hazy Memory." *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 29, no. 2 (2008): 193–210.

[76] On this point I take Fogelin's suggestion. See *Archaeology of Early Buddhism*, p. 21. For Fogelin's own summary of the Early Historic Period, see p. 11ff.

[77] Fogelin*, Archaeology of Early Buddhism,* p. 18.

[78] For a discussion of iron usage, findspots, and impact on cultural change, see Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India,* p. 29. Cited and discussed in Shaw's book are the important studies done by Kosambi and Sharma, who contributed to our present understanding of the difference between regions that utilized iron and regions that could not. D D Kosambi. "The Beginning of the Iron Age in India." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 6, no. 3 (1963): 309–18 and R S. Sharma. *Material Culture and Social Formations in Ancient India*, New Delhi: Macmillan, 1983.

[79] Coningham, "Dark Age or Continuum?" Coningham concludes that "the foundations for the emergence of the Early Historic [Period]…were already being laid during the second millennium BC" (p. 72).

[80] See Romila Thapar. *From Lineage to State*, Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1984.

capitals.[83] Archaeologically, most of these cities have been found in the Gangetic valley.[84] Some include the Buddhist cities in Magadha, such as Rajgir, and others like Rajghat, Champa, Ujjain, Taxila, and Charsadda have been located in Gandhara. Huge urban expanses spanned the whole of ancient northern India. Eventually, many consolidated via warfare or diplomacy and by the late 5th century BCE the kingdom of Magadha rose as an empire stretching from modern day Bihar to Odisha and Karnataka.[85] In 321 BCE, all of Magadha as well as the Hellenistic colonies[86] in Gandhara fell to Candragupta Maurya who moved the capital from ancient Rajgir to Pataliputra. Candragupta's grandson Aśoka went on to become the most influential ruler in ancient India and it was under his supervision that the śramaṇic religions gained patronage and formal footing on the socio-political landscape. Aśoka's empire comprised of nearly the entire Indian subcontinent, although it is up for discussion how much direct day-to-day political influence the Mauryas in Magadha had over, say, large cities in Odisha or Gandhara.

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[81] Scholars have characterized urbanization within the context of the *janapada*-s since the late 19th century. See Hemchandra Raychaudhuri. *Political History of Ancient India, From the Accession of Parikshit to the Extinction of the Gupta Dynasty*, Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1923 for a compiled listing.

[82] They have also been called socio-cultural regions which are made up of a number of small factions or even cities. See Narendra K Wagle. *Society at the Time of the Buddha*, Bombay: Popular Prakashin, 1966.

[83] The Gangetic Plain during this era consisted of a mixture of autocratic kingdoms and smaller tribal republics. Discussion regarding the exact nature of the republics (sometimes called confederacies) is ongoing, especially with regard to their political relationship(s) to the kingdoms. Some scholars have analyzed these republics as part of city-state type of governance. See George Erdosy. "City States of North India and Pakistan at the Time of the Buddha." In *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia*, edited by Frank Raymond Allchin, Cambridge, 1995.

[84] For a survey of many sites along with their accompanying excavations, reports, and descriptions, see Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*. Although there are other comprehensive and perhaps more exhaustive surveys, Shaw nicely details the development of socio-political entities throughout book as they relate specifically to ancient central India which is, of course, where Sanchi is located.

[85] Shaw*, Buddhist Landscapes in Central India,* p. 27.

[86] Alexander attempted to enter South Asia in 326 BCE to conquer Persian-controlled territories. However, although his campaign was largely unsuccessful militarily, the Hellenistic culture left behind substantially influenced Gandhara and, eventually, all of north India, especially with regard to art. See John W

The glue that held together the polities was urbanization supported by an agricultural surplus. In order to achieve such an agricultural surplus, irrigation must have been centrally administered. Textual sources as well as archaeological sources agree that water-control was a central tenant of governance.[87] Water harvesting and irrigation were one efficient means for both state and local rulers to achieve legitimization.[88]

	Early Urbanization (6th century BCE)	**Second Phase Urbanization (3rd c. BCE)**
Northwest	Charsada, Bhir Mound (Taxila)	Taxila
North	Kurukshetra, Hastinapura, Indraprastha, Atranjikhera, Sravasti, Kapilavastu	N/A
Northeast	Kausambi, Rajghat, Vaisali, Rajgir	Pataliputra, Gaya
Central	N/A	Pawwaya, Tumain, Vidisha, Ninnaur, Eran, Tripuri
East	N/A	Sisupalgarh
West	Junagadh, Pratisthana	Ujjain

Table 1.1: Early Historic Period Cities

All the major kingdoms during the Early Historic Period exhibited similar imperial characteristics. Each had a core, consisting of a capital and a heartland, and periphery, consisting of hinterlands providing natural resources. Many of the republics were subsumed into the larger polities, such as the Magadhan-based Mauryan empire, but

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McCrindle. *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2000 for one narrative description of Megasthenes' trip to India.

[87] See Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India,* p. 30 for an elaborate discussion of irrigation and the importance of water. She also provides an excellent survey of recent archaeological and historical work done in South Asia as it relates to the relationship between water-management and religion. One important book by Gunawardana covers the monastic Buddhist ownership of irrigation systems in ancient Sri Lanka. See R A L H Gunawardana. *Robe and Plough*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1979.

retained their regional characteristics. The autocratic kingdoms/empires developed more and more advanced systems to communicate with their hinterlands such as roads, coinages, edicts, and taxations. The royal edicts left behind by Aśoka are the earliest dateable written records[89] from ancient India and are an extremely important repository of historical information. Their contents range from imperial decrees to Aśoka's fascination with Buddhism and philosophy. Section 2.8 below contains a survey and brief description of the inscriptions' contents.[90]

Not more than fifty years after the death of Aśoka did the Mauryan empire collapse. The small states previously subsumed by him and his ancestors became regional players and struggled for power. One avenue to power was mercantilism. The Kaliṅga to the east and the western Sātavāhana dynasties each took control of opposite coasts and strove to appeal to the mercantile classes.[91] The Sātavāhanas governed all of modern day Andhra Pradesh and the Deccan Plateau while the Kaliṅgas claimed control over Odisha and parts of central India. The two polities struggled to annex parts of central India and

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[88] Shaw*, Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*, p. 31.

[89] Richard Salomon. "On the Origin of the Early Indian Scripts." Journal of the American Oriental Society 115, no. 2 (1995): 271–79. For recent work on Aśoka's edicts, see various sections of *Aśoka*. Edited by Patrick Olivelle, Delhi: Motilal Banasidass, 2009, and *Reimagining Aśoka*. Edited by Patrick Olivelle, Janice Leoshko, and Himanshu Prabha Ray, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012.

[90] The Arthaśāstra attributed to Kauṭilya, Aśoka's political advisor, is also an extremely detailed and important compendium of information regarding ancient India. The dating of the text is unsure but most scholars are in agreement that the text is not a Mauryan document as it is currently compiled. Most of the text was likely compiled in the last century BCE or first century CE with ongoing emendations and insertions made for some centuries afterwards. The text likely serves as a better representation of life and politics during the 1st century CE rather than the 3rd century BCE. Professor Olivelle's translation is now available and contains valuable discussions. See Patrick Olivelle. *King, Governance, and Law in Ancient India*, Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

[91] Buddhist literature describes urban-based economies supported by agricultural sectors. Presumably, this was the model in both kingdoms. The control of prestige good exchange undoubtedly influenced the agricultural sectors in the hinterlands. For a brief discussion, see Bailey and Mabbett. *The Sociology of Early Buddhism*.

occasionally one expanded their kingdom to the opposite's coast without fully conquering the other.[92]

Another avenue to power was religion, particularly Buddhism and Jainism, the two burgeoning śramaṇic religions who gained patronage during the Mauryan period. Buddhism was a religion well-suited to merchants, guilds[93] and individuals upset with the status quo in society. Greg Bailey and Ian Mabbett summarize two views to explain Buddhism within the context of urbanization.[94] The first argues that Buddhism allowed non-*brāhmaṇa*-s to ascend to legitimate elite status[95] (inside and outside the *saṁgha*) and thus favored urban development. The second approach is more negative in that Buddhism philosophically taught that urbanization was problematic because it directly led to poverty, illness, and social malcontent. Since these problems were all enveloped within the concept of *dukkha*, Buddhism provided a method for dealing with the adverse effects

[92] Fogelin*, Archaeology of Early Buddhism*, p. 31ff.

[93] This point has been taken up by a variety of scholars, namely Himanshu Prabha Ray. *Monastery and Guild*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986 and Andy Rotman. *Thus Have I Seen*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. In particular, Rotman sees an "unmistakeable mercantile ethos" in abundance within the *Divyāvadāna* (p. 12), which is, of course, a text that most likely post-dates the earliest centuries of the Early Historic Period.

[94] Shaw*, Buddhist Landscapes in Central India,* p. 32ff also takes up the discussion. Long ago, Gokhale suggested "The Buddha and his followers maintained an extensive and continuous contact with lay devotees during his lifetime and the period of a few decades after his demise. But, by the beginning of the fourth century B. C , Buddhism had become localised in fixed and well-endowed monasteries, first drawing upon lay mercantile support but later, and increasingly, dependent upon royal endowments…When the state began to be "feudalised" after the end of the Maurya empire, the *saṅgha* was also consequently "feudalised," as it depended on endowments of land. By the time Mahayana came onto the scene, this process of "feudalisation" was far advanced and it left its own philosophical (especially metaphysical) imprint on the character of the evolving Buddhism itself." Balkrishna Govind Gokhale. "Early Buddhism and the Urban Revolution." *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 5, no. 2 (1982), pp. 20-21. Unfortunately, Gokhale only observes some correlations and could not provide detailed enough data to suggest causation. Nevertheless, his attempt is noteworthy in that it provides historical trajectory, something many scholarly works regarding socio-cultural aspects of early Indian Buddhism sorely lack.

[95] Bailey and Mabbett, *The Sociology of Early Buddhism* provides a general introduction to the relationship between Buddhism and urbanism. However, other studies might be more convincing as Bailey and Mabbett fall short of utilizing all the available evidence. See, for example, Thapar, *From Lineage to State*.

of urbanization and thus flourished.[96] Both perspectives position the growing Buddhist institution as an organization befitting the era.[97] Neelis rightly suggests that urbanization and Buddhism are concurrent phenomenon, rejecting the causal hypothesis that urbanization sprung Buddhism.[98] I agree fully with Neelis but would add that the Buddhist institution itself directly benefitted from the residual effects that only urbanization could have provided, such as access to greater numbers of potential donors, converts, and political elites, in addition to literal pathways to resources, like roads and communication.

One of the most defining features of Early Historic Period central India is its position geographically between the two major trade routes of the era, namely the Uttarāpatha ('Northern Route') and the Dakṣināpatha ('Southern Route'). These two routes were trans-regional systems that functioned essentially as capillaries or feeder routes to the Silk Routes that spanned from the ancient Mediterranean to China and beyond. The networks of roads often connected at nodal points which were major cities such as Mathura, Etawah, Kaushambi, Varanasi, and Rajgir.[99] Raw materials and prestige

[96] We may point to some words in texts like the Pāli canon that give us some hint of the development of urbanization. For instance, words *gāma* ('village') and *nigama*, ('market place') appear often, but the word *nagara*, 'city', is not found, indicating that at least at some level the texts harken to a pre-urbanized period. However, it is difficult to rely on this small bit of evidence alone to place Buddhism historically.

[97] Neelis aptly summarizes: "Economic conditions of rural prosperity, urban growth, political consolidation, and expanding trade networks contributed to the institutional organization of the Buddhist saṁgha, which emerged in an environment of material prosperity rather than hardship." Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 74. As found in Neelis' book, as well as in Bailey and Mabbett's, Max Weber was one of the first to hypothesize the "urbanization hypothesis" which posited a direct correlation between city growth and Buddhism's emergence. See Max Weber. *The Religion of India*. Translated by Hans H Gerth and Don Martindale, Glencoe: Free Press, 1958; *The Sociology of Early Buddhism*, pp. 34-35.

[98] Neelis*, Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 75.

[99] Neelis*, Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 205ff.

goods[100] could be moved and exchanged along these routes.[101] Some routes connected these nodal cities and their resource-rich hinterlands with ports on either side of the Indian subcontinent. The Dakṣināpatha in particular was a vital imperial asset since it connected access to the Indian ocean on either side to the interior of the subcontinent. Aśoka's edicts often appear at strategic points along the routes which indicates their importance as far back as probably Aśoka's grandfather in the early 4th century BCE.[102] Their development as commercial passageways are yet another concurrent development of urbanization.

Many notable Buddhist archaeological sites have been found on the routes directly or nearby. One may consider any number of major *stūpa* pilgrimage centers but most relevant to this dissertation are Bharhut and Sanchi, along with their nearby urban centers from which many patrons hailed. Bharhut lies on the Tons River valley in modern northeastern Madhya Pradesh which is strategically important because it is an intermediate capillary between the Uttarāpatha and Dakṣināpatha. Jason Hawkes, who has done the most extensive recent work on Bharhut and its vicinity, concluded that trade was inevitably one of the most important factors in the founding of the *stūpa* in the first

[100] A list of goods mentioned in the Arthaśāstra traded along the Dakṣināpatha may be found in Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 209. These include conch-shells, diamonds, rubies, pearls, and gold. The Dakṣināpatha was probably the "more profitable" route. A translation of this section [7.12.28] in the Arthaśāstra can now be found in Olivelle, *King, Governance, and Law in Ancient India*, p. 311. The Arthaśāstra is explicit in mentioning that routes allowing wheeled carts are the best routes because it "permits large-scale undertakings."

[101] There is a discrepancy between textual, archaeological, and epigraphic sources in what was actually moved along the routes. The items listed in the Arthaśāstra are not present in archaeological data examined by Lahiri. See Nayanjot Lahiri. *The Archaeology of Indian Trade Routes Up to c. 200 BC*, Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992, p. 384ff. Nevertheless, Neelis does not believe that this "invalidates general patterns of exchange between northern and southern India." Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 209.

place.[103] Nearby Bharhut is a newly discovered *stūpa* site called Deor Kothar, which has yielded a number of extremely important and early Buddhist inscriptions delineating a possible monastic lineage going back to the Buddha himself.[104] Moving north from Bharhut and Deor Kothar the route intersects with other important Buddhist locations known from literature as being the heartland in which the Buddha wandered with his original *saṁgha*.

Southwest from Bharhut and Deor Kothar was the city of Vidisha[105], the largest and closest urban center to Sanchi. Vidisha was one of the largest urban centers not in the Ganges basin during the Mauryan and post-Mauryan imperial periods because of its vital strategic location along both the Uttarāpatha and the Dakṣināpatha. As such, the city was able to generate patronage for Buddhist and non-Buddhist religious institutions in the vicinity via the travel mercantile classes. Like at Bharhut and Deor Kothar, the Buddhist supporters in and around Vidisha favored the construction of *stūpa*-s for pilgrimage purposes. At Sanchi in particular donative epigraphy provides much evidence for the transregional networks flowing through the Uttarāpatha and Dakṣināpatha. Donors at Sanchi came from urban centers in all four cardinal directions and will be discussed at length in Chapter 3. Sometime during the late to mid 2nd century BCE the Indo-Greek

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[102] A list of references in the Aśokan edicts can be found in Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 206ff.

[103] Jason Hawkes. "The Wider Archaeological Contexts of the Buddhist Stūpa Site of Bharhut." In *Buddhist Stūpas in South Asia*, edited by Jason D Hawkes and Akira Shimada, 146–74, New Delhi: OUP, 2009, p. 168.

[104] See Oskar von Hinüber, and Peter Skilling. "Two Buddhist Inscriptions From Deorkothar (Dist. Rewa, Madhya Pradesh)." *ARIRIAB* 16 (2013): 13–26 and Richard Salomon and Joseph Marino. "Observations on the Deorkothar Inscriptions and Their Significance for Evaluation of Buddhist Historical Traditions." *ARIRIAB* 17 (2014): 27–40.

king Antialkidas from Taxila in Gandhara sent an ambassador named Heliodoros to Vidisha where the court of Kāśīputra Bhāgabhadra lived.[106] Heliodoros was a devotee of the god Viṣṇu as recorded in his famous pillar inscription. It is very likely that Kāśīputra Bhāgabhadra controlled and/or taxed the two routes which converged within his political horizon. The Heliodoros pillar inscription on the outskirts of modern Vidisha is an important historical document for regional history and one of our earliest existing references to the practice of non-Buddhist religions from ancient central India.[107] In addition to being important to the Uttarāpatha and Dakṣināpatha routes, Vidisha was also situated along east-west routes connecting the Ganga-Yamuna basin in the Narmada valley and ports on either side of the subcontinent.[108] Prior to major Buddhist monumental construction projects, as at Sanchi and its many satellite sites, the Vidisha region was heavily involved in worshipping Nāgas and other popular religious deities.[109] However, recent historical and art historical work has revealed that the Buddhists had an intense preoccupation with seeking out and converting the deities themselves in order to convert the deities' own devotees, thus re-writing the local mythologies to suit their own interests. Many times these converted local deities were used as divine protectors for Buddhist monasteries, *stūpa*-s, or other structures. The plethora of Nāga and other sculptures found locally at Sanchi and its vicinity is a testament to this process at work

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[105] Vidisha's size rivaled any city in ancient South Asia. Excavation summaries and details are provided in a number of sources, but the most comprehensive introduction might be found in Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*, pp. 21-22 since she personally surveyed all the land surrounding Sanchi.
[106] Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 206.
[107] Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*, p. 131. Also, see Shaw chapter 9 for a discussion of the Heliodoros pillar.
[108] Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 213.

within the area, signaling the success Buddhism came to have institutionally.[110] Fascinating evidence from within the confines of urban boundaries indicates that Buddhists also built monuments in the Vidisha proper from the 2nd century BCE until at least the 1st or even 2nd century CE.[111] However, it is unclear just how concurrent or syncretic the Buddhist and non-Buddhist religions were until the existing evidence is thoroughly re-examined.[112]

The city of Ujjain is the last major city worthy of mention with regard to ancient central India. Functioning as a large node of long-distance trade and intraregional communication, Ujjain was the capital of Avanti, one of the major *janapada*-s of the era.[113] Inhabited since approximately the 6th century BCE, literary tradition asserts that Aśoka served as an imperial viceroy in Ujjain prior to his coronation as Mauryan emperor.[114] Ujjain was certainly a mercantile capital as well giving it status as a regional power-broker whereby traders from the north and south could exchange goods. Ujjain, like Vidisha, contributed vastly to the Buddhist monuments at Sanchi and its vicinity, most likely because the monastic Buddhists there were either previously involved in the

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[109] Numerous examples may be cited but to begin one could look to Julia Shaw. "Nāga Sculptures in Sanchi's Archaeological Landscape." *Artibus Asiae* 64 (2004): 5–59.

[110] For a lengthy and interesting read on this process, see Robert DeCaroli. *Haunting the Buddha*, Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, particularly p121ff. Julia Shaw previously studied the relationship between water management and the presence of Nāga sculptures at Sanchi: Shaw, "Nāga Sculptures in Sanchi's Archaeological Landscape."

[111] See Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*, p. 130 for sources and a summary.

[112] Probably the religions were concurrent traditions and competed for patronage but there is little evidence for the non-Buddhist religions, such as Vaiṣṇavism, during the two or three centuries when Buddhism erected its first generation of major monuments, like at Sanchi. Sculptures and other architectures or items previously used at other sites were often moved to Buddhist monastic areas, thus creating a major problem for historians attempting to determine the breadth of a religious tradition during the era.

[113] Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 214.

[114] Local tradition in the Vidisha area asserts that Aśoka's wife was from Sanchi hence his preoccupation with erecting an imperial edict on the hilltop along with, presumably, the large *stūpa* still extant today.

mercantile communities in these cities and/or were sympathetic to the mercantile castes in that they did not philosophically or soteriologically punish the traders for pursuing wealth and prosperity.

Wealth and Money

Unlike the ancient Mediterranean,[115] South Asia's coinage tradition did not begin until the waning centuries Before the Common Era. However, like ancient Greece, a monetary system was not conceived of until the mechanisms to print a coinage system was in place.[116] In essence, the creation of coinage was the creation of a monetary system. Seals were used during the time of the Indus Valley civilization to mark commodities but apparently their use was discontinued prior to approximately era before Aśoka. Beginning at that time, with the innovation of a monetary system which saw the use of coins alongside mercantile seals, social stratification became common place in South Asia at a much higher rate than was previously known. Elites exploited the newly minted advanced system of exchange whereby they could track their goods, labor, and general investments. Many of Aśoka's innovations, such as roads, distribution of royal edicts in written form, etc. facilitated a new semi-state regulated and underwritten shared legal structure ripe for

[115] Historically, the invention of money and the utilization and exchange of goods that could be circulated geographically around the world (especially around regions containing few if any barriers for transport, such as large mountains or un-sailable waters) allowed for human institutions to flourish. See David M Schaps. *The Invention of Coinage and the Monetization of Ancient Greece*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004, p.1 for introductory level discussions pertaining to this concept.

[116] Schaps, *The Invention of Coinage and the Monetization of Ancient Greece*, p. 15. Money is not exactly the same as coinage since many items have and will always serve the same function as coinages (pp. 14-15). Schaps argued that, "the invention of coinage *was* the invention of money: that is, the concept that we understand as "money" did not exist before the seventh century B.C.E. when coins were first minted" (p. 15, emphasis mine). Schaps is not alone in his view: see Richard Seaford. *Money and the Early Greek Mind*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

institutional founding, as seen in the advent of the śramaṇic religions, namely Buddhism and Jainism.

Despite antiquated claims that coinage traditions date as far back as the Indus Valley, or even perhaps farther back if one believes traditional timelines posited by revisionist Hindu historians, there is no archaeological basis for coins before Aśoka nor is it likely that the Vedas contained actual references to coins but rather to unmarked gold pieces.[117] Pāṇini knew something about the striking[118] process but he might be the *terminus post quem* for textual references. The coinage tradition from the Mauryan period[119] and thereafter was largely unified indicating a greater level of state or regionally managed minting.

South Asian coinage began with square-shaped coins with symbolic designs, likely around the 5th century BCE. The phase is characterized by the punch-marking of coins from sheets of silver.[120] They were often stamped with five small symbols, the sun, a six-

[117] A S Altekar. "Origin and Early History of Coinage in Ancient India." *Numismatic Society of India* 15 (1953): 1–26, particularly pp. 13-19. Further information is provided by Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 102: "From around 250 BCE until the late first century BCE, Bactrian and Indo-Greek kings successfully established control of regional domains while struggling to defend against Sakas and other groups migrating across Central Asia. Their dynastic history is mostly reconstructed through numismatic analysis of widely distributed coinage, which along with other forms of material evidence reflects a synthesis of Greek, Indian and Iranian languages and writing systems, political titles, religious symbols, and artistic styles."

[118] Satya Prakash, and Rajendra Singh. *Coinage in Ancient India*, New Delhi: Research Institute of Ancient Scientific Studies, 1968, p. 325.

[119] It is important to remember the problems of labeling any coinage as Mauryan. Shailendra Bhandare. "From Kauṭilya to Kosam and Beyond." In *Reimagining Aśoka*, edited by Patrick Olivelle, Janice Leoshko, and Himanshu Prabha Ray, 94–128, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012 has called such approximations "at best an exercise and at worse a flight of fancy" (p. 128).

[120] Many scholars have attempted many different methods for categorizing the punch-marked coins. For instance, Alexander Cunningham favored a "morphocentric" and "semiocentric" approach. Sometimes these approaches were in pursuit of linking the coins to dynasties. Bhandare, "From Kauṭilya to Kosam and Beyond," categorizes these approaches by considers the "morphocentric" method the most "rewarding" since the coins are allowed to speak for themselves (p. 127).

armed symbol, hare in the new moon, arched hill with a crescent,[121] and tank with four fishes.[122] Some square copper coins were also minted at the approximately same time period (3rd or 2nd century BCE). All South Asian coinage during the Early Historic Period were very likely strongly influenced by the Greek traditions, especially since the era was bookended by Alexander the Great's attempted invasion. Alexander's coins have been found all throughout Gandhara as well as coinages from the successive rulers, namely the Scythians, Parthians, and Kuṣāṇas, who also inherited the coinage tradition from Greece.[123] Nevertheless, the Greeks probably did not introduce coins to South Asia on the basis that hundreds of punch-marked coins were found at Taxila alongside brand new Alexander coins. The Indian punch-marked coins were well worn and not recent.[124]

From many Indo-Greek coins we learn that some kings endorsed Buddhism as well as other Indian religions. Menander in particular is famous in Buddhism for his patronage; however, his coinage is replete with ambiguous references to wheels, which could refer to either the generic wheel-turning emperor or the wheel of *dharma*.[125] The Kuṣāṇa king Kaniṣka during the 1st or 2nd century CE is famous for depicting what might be some of the earliest images of the Buddha known to exist. Some of his coins

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[121] The so-called "arched hill with a crescent" may or may not represent the Mauryan imperial dynasty. However, its date cannot of emergence cannot be accurately correlated with any dynasty let alone the Mauryan one and therefore should the linkage should only be considered tentative as Bhandare cautions (p. 119ff).

[122] Joe Cribb. "The Origins of the Indian Coinage Tradition." *South Asian Studies* 19, no. 1 (2003): 1–19, p. 2.

[123] Cribb, "The Origins of the Indian Coinage Tradition," p. 5

[124] E H C Walsh. *Punch-Marked Coins From Taxila*. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India. Vol. 39, Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1939, p. 1-2.

[125] See Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, pp. 104-105 for references and discussion. Further, as Neelis observes (p. 106), the Heliodorus pillar in Vedisa in the late 2nd century BCE is dedicated to Viṣṇu and not the Buddha, which might be considered odd since Sanchi is very close nearby.

depict advances in Buddhist iconography by showing the Buddha or Maitreya on their reverses.[126] Even these coins, though, which label the Buddha directly with an inscription, are not entirely unique within the corpus of Kaniṣka's coinages. Kaniṣka put Śiva, Mithra, Ahurmazda, and other gods on coins. Minting the Buddha on the coins merely meant that Kaniṣka favored the Buddha on the same level as other deities.[127]

Extant Buddhist archaeological sites frequently yield hoards of gems, gold, and coins, especially at known monastic sites. Curiously, amongst the reliquaries found at Piprahwa in modern Uttar Pradesh was an especially large hoard of treasure found along with charred bone. Piprahwa is famous because one reliquary contains a label inscription which may potentially refer to the corporeal relics of the Buddha himself. Even if the relics found at the site are only those of locally known monastics, the connection between wealth (which here also included jewels), monasticism, and reliquary worship is pertinent and has been noted for more than a century. In excavating Taxila, Marshall hypothesized that a hollow block of kanjur was "merely a secret hiding place where one of the monks hid his store of coins."[128] Another famous example relating monastic Buddhists to coinage comes from Nāgarjunakonda where a group of monks seemed to possess the capability to mint their own coins despite the fact that coin minting would have been

[126] See Joe Cribb. "Kaniṣka's Buddha Coins." *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 3, no. 2 (1980): 79–88 for a thorough discussion. Cribb identifies Maitreya on these coins for the first time (p. 81).
[127] Cribb, "Kaniṣka's Buddha Coins," p. 80.
[128] John Marshall. *Taxila*. Vol. 1, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951, p. 240. The same passage was famously cited and quoted by Gregory Schopen more than twenty years ago in "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism." *History of Religions* 31, no. 1 (1991): 1–23, p. 7. Such quotations have become a part of Schopen's scholarly "calling cards" since his writings can easily incite awe for those not previously familiar with his work.

primarily a task of the state.[129] Schopen came to the conclusion that this was evidence that the monks were counterfeiting coinage.[130] Generally speaking, Schopen is probably right to conclude that "wealth is derived from wealth" and given that the phenomenon is abundantly present in the Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya, his chief source of analyzing Buddhism in the Common Era, it is difficult to argue otherwise.[131]

Religious finance was an ongoing process during the Early Historic Period. The cave at Kashmir Smast, as Harry Falk described,[132] puts at least one firm date into the timeline regarding the experimentation and development of religious finance. The cave seems to have been a cash machine that all major religious groups wanted to claim for themselves from at least the 2nd century CE to at least the 4th century. Because of the lack of religious buildings aside from the Buddhists prior to that century, it may be hypothesized that the Buddhists were the first to create concerted efforts into the realm of generating money for the sake of material things and institutional survival. At this point, religious finance was a highly developed part of religious institutions and could only have gotten there via the efforts of earlier religious entrepreneurs.

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[129] Albert Henry Longhurst. *The Buddhist Antiquities of Nāgarjunakonda, Madras Presidency*. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India. Delhi: Manager of Publications, 1938, p. 10 finds that a hoard of coins were found alongside a lump of lead ore and an earthenware die for the exact specifications of the found coin dimensions. An earlier mould for coins was found by Sarma, see I K Sarma. "A Coin Mould-Piece From Nagarjunakonda." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 16 (1973): 89–106. Both references are cited in Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism."

[130] Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism," pp. 8-9.

[131] This is one of the main points of his article "Art, Beauty, and the Business of Running a Buddhist Monastery" article published in "Art, Beauty, and the Business of Running a Buddhist Monastery in Early Northwest India" 2 (2004): 19–44 for the first time (specifically, p. 31).

[132] See Harry Falk. "Money Can Buy Me Heaven." *Archaeologische Mitteilungen Aus Iran Und Turan*, 2008, 137–48.

The entanglement between Buddhists and coins—and, indeed, even more broadly, money—within the material record displays the general process of complexity. Buddhism as an institution became gradually more and more involved in the cycle of greater dependencies on material things. This trend was not unique to Buddhists as all of South Asian civilization simultaneously became entangled with the same trappings. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, the normative Buddhist approach to money and economics in the Pāli canon developed over time and grew into a complex mythology that recognized the value of economic engagement since the institution itself recognized the need to propagate itself through the symbiotic relationship with its patrons, namely the elite laity.

Śramaṇic Religion

While urbanization was re-emerging during the Early Historic Period, religion was also transforming. Even though urbanization and Buddhism were concurrent, they were not static entities existing in vacuums. Each dramatically changed over the centuries. Just as polities were consolidated (such as into the Mauryan empire), so too were religious traditions (for instance, in the Pāli canon, shortly after the Buddha's death his monks came together to formulate a cohesive totality of his teachings). Just as polities expanded or separated into entirely different entities (i.e., the Mauryan empire dissolving paving the way for the Sātavāhanas and Kaliṅgas), so too did the religions (for example, Buddhism's sectarian split into different schools with their own recensions of the *Buddhavacana*). Power shifted and so too did the ways the religions expressed themselves materially. There is no better extant example of Buddhism's early material expression than the remains at Sanchi.

The Buddha was a character central to the transformation of non-brāhmaṇical religion in ancient South Asia. Traditionally, there has been some discussion as to just how brāhmaṇical[133] Siddhartha Gautama, the historical Buddha, was since all of his biographies as we have them in their extant forms portray him as born into a clan that consulted learned *ṛṣi*-s for ritualistic fortunetelling and guidance. Further, many sources show that many early Buddhists were adept in the traditions of the *brāhmaṇa*-s.[134]

Two significant recent publications—Sheldon Pollock's *Language of the Gods in the World of Men*[135] and Johannes Bronkhorst's *Greater Magadha*[136]—look at Buddhism and brāhmaṇism through the lens of historical linguistics. In particular, Pollock's concept of the Sanskrit "cosmopolis"[137] has fueled many interesting, if not entirely revolutionary, ideas concerning the role of Sanskrit in the state and cultural formations of South and Southeast Asia from the 1st century CE until approximately the 10th century CE.

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[133] Tracing renunciation rites from *brāhmaṇism* to Buddhism has proven to be a difficult chore that has yet to bear much fruit. Oliver Freiberger. "Resurrection From the Dead? The Brāhmaṇical Rite of Renunciation and Its Irreversibility" In *Words and Deeds*, edited by Jorg Gengnagel and Ute Hüsken, 235–56, Göttingen, 2005, p. 236ff.

[134] Nearly a century ago, Sukumar Dutt challenged the notion that Buddhist monasticism was derived from brāhmaṇical renunciation. Dutt concluded that the Buddhist and Jaina traditions of renunciation had no exact origin. Sukumar Dutt. *Early Buddhist Monachism*, London: Kegan Paul, 1924.

[135] Sheldon Pollock. *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2006.

[136] Bronkhorst, *Greater Magadha*.

[137] According to Pollock, two major moments pertain to the Sanskrit cosmopolis. The first is when Sanskrit, "long a sacred language restricted to religious practice, was reinvented as a code for literary and political expression" *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men*, p. 1. This reinvention spread from South Asia to parts of Central and Southeast Asia in the early centuries of the Common Era. Thereafter, Sanskrit was no longer *just* a liturgical language but rather an important expressive medium for politics and literature, including poetry, science, and grammar. Eventually, after something near a thousand years, the second moment was when Sanskrit was overthrown as the dominant medium by the "vernacular epoch," which apparently still exists until this day. Included and important to this shift in the use and significance of Sanskrit is Buddhism, perhaps an innocent bystander, but possibly an important protagonist of the cosmopolis considering the widespread influence Buddhist religious networks played in the landscape of South, Central, and Southeast Asia. In Pollock, see pp. 51-59 for a detailed discussion of Buddhism and its place in the turn toward Sanskrit.

Bronkhorst[138] deploys regional analysis in separating the religious culture of ancient Magadha to the east and the ancient central Gangetic plain to the west of what we now call India. Associated with each region is a separate, emergent religious culture, namely Vedic brahmanism to the west and Buddhism/Jainism/Ājīvikism to the east.[139]

I do not disagree with either Pollock's notion of the Sanskrit cosmopolis and the significance of Buddhism adopting Sanskrit, or Bronkhorst's claim that Greater Magadha was its own independent cultural zone that came into the cosmopolis' fold only gradually and without formal conversion. Both scholars have presented thorough investigations

[138] Bronkhorst does not deal directly with Pollock in Greater Magadha due to its publication date. In *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, Bronkhorst tussles with Pollock directly in order to defend his theory that Indian Buddhists adopted Sanskrit in order to defend their interests at court. See Johannes Bronkhorst. *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism*, Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011. It should be noted that Bronkhorst does not outright disagree with Pollock's linguistic acculturation model but simply seeks to apply it in a nuanced manner. Pollock seeks to investigate Sanskrit's political power beyond brahmanical power *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men*, p. 139, implying a disconnect between Sanskrit and brahmanism at the level of regional expansion. On the other hand, Bronkhorst attempts to trace the spread of Sanskrit in conjunction with, rather than a separation from, the spread of brahmanism. He asks, "were these two really unconnected? Is it not more likely that they had something to do with each other?" *Buddhism in the Shadow of Brahmanism,* p. 51.

[139] In addition to the reservations I present below, Neelis does not accept Bronkhorst's "localization of a single underlying 'spiritual ideology' exclusively in Magadha." See *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 72 and Neelis, Jason. "Reviewed Work: *Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India* By Johannes Bronkhorst." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 18, no. 3 (2008): 381–83. A recent dissertation by Lauren Bausch also finds Bronkhorst's argument troublesome. She concludes, "the Kāṇva School and many of the Vedic munis featured in the Suttanipāta are located in Kosala. On the margins of both the Vedic orthodoxy and the ascetic frontier, the Kosala region gave rise to a special expression of Vedic tradition that continued earlier Vedic thought, but at the same time interpreted it in terms of cognitive activity. The place to look for key ideas employed by the Buddha when teaching brāhmaṇa munis is not only the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, but also the other Yājñavalkya kāṇḍas of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa. To say, with Bronkhorst, that Vedic Brāhmaṇism did not form the background of the Buddha's preaching or that karmic retribution is not to be found in the Vedas is misleading. While Bronkhorst is absolutely right to focus on the region of Greater Magadha for the formal articulation of the doctrine of karma, studying Kosala in particular shows that Vedic thought did form at least part of the background of the Buddha's thought and influenced his ideas about cause and effect as well as his soteriological framework…Like the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, the Buddha was concerned with expanding one's conditioned space (loka), which shrinks or even collapses due to not paying attention to karmic retribution. However, by being mindful to what is streaming in one's mind, a person can begin to expand his or her conditioned space to be aware of karmic retribution and not be moved by it." See Bausch, Lauren. "Kosalan Philosophy in the *Kāṇva Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* And the *Suttanipāta.*" PhD Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2015, p. 176.

and, to greater or lesser extents, shed new light on the relationship between Buddhism, Brāhmaṇism, Sanskrit, and the so-called vernacular languages. However, I do have a methodological problem in that these two scholars nearly completely ignore non-linguistic developments in South Asia during the Early Historic period in favor of linguistic acculturation. That is, all of both Pollock and Bronkhorst's evidence, as far as I can tell, derive from either problematically dated textual sources or decontextualized, isolated epigraphic evidence. While I praise both scholars' erudite readings of epigraphy and am satisfied with their inclusion of this evidence,[140] I believe it is difficult to use epigraphy as firm evidence for historical developments without considering what is going on at the very sites where the epigraphy lies. Moreover, sporadically cherry picking inscriptional evidence to fit arguments runs the risk of becoming anachronistic, especially since the breadth of epigraphic material is heavily dwarfed by the massive literary corpus from ancient India. Because the evidence is sparse, there is a tendency to exaggerate its importance, relevance, and relationship to other evidence.

Siddhartha Gautama likely passed away sometime in the late 5th or very early 4th century BCE, although there is some debate within the tradition itself as to the exact dates.[141] Many notable contributors to Heinz Bechert's symposium and subsequent

[140] Bronkhorst uses the Rudradāman Sanskrit inscription from the 2nd century as evidence for the "first political use of Sanskrit" (p. 62). Rudradāman, not a brahmanical ruler himself, at the very least, adopted a "brahmanical vision" for his kingdom. In doing so, Rudradāman, according to Bronkhorst's reading, retroactively assigned a similar identity to previous kings (p. 63), thus honoring a brahmanical vision for society and legitimizing himself as an "Indian" (?) ruler (p. 64). Rudradāman, then, in the 2nd century, is evidence for a reinvented Brahmanism that was "not a simply continuation of Vedic priesthood, but something new that proposed far more than simply executing sacrifices for rulers who needed them" (p. 65). As such, it was brahmanism emerging as a socio-political ideology that coincides seemingly close to the rise of Buddhist literature in Sanskrit for the first time.

[141] An excellent review is provided by Cousins, see Lance S Cousins. "The Dating of the Historical Buddha." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 6, no. 1 (1996): 57–63. East Asian traditions have variously

volumes on dating the historical Buddha favor this chronology, ranging from roughly 420 BCE to as late as 350 BCE. The reasons for this are varied, but many scholars point to the available archaeological evidence, which is extremely scarce until Aśoka's reign. A date in the very late 5th century BCE was not new by the 1980s since about a hundred years earlier prominent Buddhologist T. W. Rhys Davids proposed a date around 412 BCE based on Sri Lankan historical chronicles like the *Dīpavaṁsa* which use Aśoka's approximate coronation date as the primary marker.[142] Regardless, the persisting debate pertains to which source to trust the most or the method used to reconstruct the date. The late L. S. Cousins favored a date closer to 400 BCE, like most scholars today.[143]

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assigned dates of the Buddha's life as ranging from the 10th century to the 7th century BCE. Some of these traditions retroactively assigned the Buddha's life as having been before the life of Lao-tse hence making the date of the Buddha's birth and death a polemical religious point in ancient China. Tibto-Mongolian dates are also sporadic. Many of these traditions assign the date of the Buddha's life to the 9th century while earlier Tibetan authorities pushed it as far back as the 22nd century BCE. Meanwhile, the so-called Southern schools have never had much disagreement and their chronologies begin at 543 BCE (p. 57ff). The 5th century BCE approximation is also accepted by Neelis, as well as nearly all other contemporary scholars. *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks*, p. 67.

[142] Discussed in "The Dating of the Historical Buddha," pp. 61-62. Aśoka's inscriptions are also incredibly important for gleaning tidbits of information about the Buddha's life. For instance, at Lumbini, an Aśokan inscription claims to commemorate the spot where the Buddha was born. The same inscription describes the construction of a shrine. Even though the exact location of Lumbini is still up for debate, it is clear that Aśoka, or at least one of Aśoka's informants, had a clear notion of where the Buddha was supposedly born. The shrine at Lumbini as well as much recent archaeological work has been the subject of some recent conversations. Robin Coningham claims to have discovered proof of a 6th century BCE timeline for the birth of the Buddha and the subsequent birth of Buddhism as a religion. However, the findings published in 2013 only describe a tree-shrine which is not definitively Buddhist. The ongoing discussion about his findings will surely be a polarizing one in the future since it teeters on the crux of Buddhism's origins. Until further evidence is presented, I do not accept Coningham's new date for the Buddha. I do view his findings as extremely important for the history of South Asian religion in general since the tree shrine, regardless of its affiliation, could be one of the earliest if not the earliest known shrine excavated. See Robin Coningham, K P Acharya, K M Strickland, C E Davis, M J Manuel, I A Simpson, K Gilliland, J Tremblay, T C Kinnaird, and D C W Sanderson. "The Earliest Buddhist Shrine." *Antiquity* 87, no. 338 (2013): 1104–23.

[143] Cousins, "The Dating of the Historical Buddha," p. 60.

Later hagiographies of Siddhartha[144] reveal that his father was a headman within a clan called the Śākyas, hence the adoption of Siddhartha's title Śākyamuni. Around age 29, Siddhartha left his father's secluded palace to become an ascetic and seek a remedy for the problem of suffering. He sought out and learned from the most prominent forest ascetic teachers of the era and bested them in ability and realization. Figuring out that the solution was a Middle Way[145] between luxury and extreme self-mortification, he sat under the Bodhi Tree on the outskirts of Gaya in Magadha to achieve liberation, six years after his initial undertaking. Slowly, he attracted followers thus beginning the process of establishing a wholly new religion.

Buddhism as we can trace it historically spread from Magadha to most of Asia within eight centuries and became a proverbial *tour de force* on the religious landscape, forcing all the locally dominant religions to respond to the sheer power harnessed within the words of the Buddha (*Buddhavacana*). Several key features of Buddhism allowed it to be successful, not only in spreading from city to city within the Gangetic Plain, but also from country to country.[146]

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[144] Hagiographies of the Buddha also serve as useful socio-political sources. In recent years, two notable scholars have criticized privileging one type of source over another for the Buddha's life. John S Strong. *The Buddha*, Oxford: Oneworld, 2001 attempts to portray the Buddha's life as a story rather than as history (p. 2ff). Meanwhile, Hallisey is critical of over-relying on Pāli and Sanskrit sources rather than so-called vernacular ones. See Charles Hallisey. "Roads Taken and Not Taken in the Study of Theravāda Buddhism." In *Curators of the Buddha*, edited by Donald S Lopez Jr, 31–62, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

[145] On this topic, I am particularly fond of Freiberger's definition of the Middle Way as a rhetorical device which opposes severe mortification. See Oliver Freiberger. "Early Buddhism, Asceticism and the Politics of the Middle Way." In *Asceticism and Its Critics*, edited by Oliver Freiberger, 235–58, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

[146] Early excavators of Buddhist sites in India during the 19th and 20th centuries viewed Buddhism as an integral byproduct of urbanization and hence began a tradition of studying Buddhism in this light. Recent scholarly work does not disprove this concept but it is worth mentioning here to provide caution since there is a very distinct western history of viewing Buddhism as a part of increasing urbanism.

First, Buddhism largely downplayed caste identity and instead focused on monasticism where only seniority mattered. Second, Buddhism, as explored in Chapter 3, taught that wealth was not a problem and was, in fact, a necessary endeavor for lay people. Therefore, Buddhism was attractive to mercantile classes who possessed much power and wealth in the urbanizing subcontinent. Third, by the 1st century BCE, Buddhism ingeniously took advantage of established trade routes and actively pursued the spread of the Buddha's teachings in an extremely transformative way: books.[147] Copies of the Buddha's teachings could be easily transported.[148] These documents were encouraged by the Buddha's actual teachings to be translated into local languages and taught in a way that non-religious professionals could understand. The books were simultaneously read for their profound insights and worshipped as relics in lieu of actual relics from the Buddha. Last but not least was Buddhism's institutional integrity. The monastic rules were a relatively fixed[149] set of precepts that provided structure for serious religious seekers. In time, the very same monastic institution provided education to the general populous by openly teaching its dogma. The emergent institutional religion that was Buddhism came to be a powerful player in the religious landscape using these

[147] The cultivation and transmission of manuscripts is the subject of the edited volume *Buddhist Manuscript Cultures*. Edited by Stephen C Berkwitz, Juliane Schober, and Claudia Brown, New York: Routledge, 2009. In particular, see Jens-Uwe Hartmann. "From Words to Books." In *Buddhist Manuscript Cultures*, pp. 95–105.

[148] Not only transported, but also worshipped, if we are to believe Schopen's famous claim about the "cult of the book" during the rise of the Mahāyāna. See Gregory Schopen. "The Phrase Sa Pṛthvīpradeśaś Caityabhūto Bhavet in the Vajrachedikā." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 17 (1975): 147–81. For a recent challenge, see David Drewes. "Revisiting the Phrase 'Sa Pṛthvīpradeśaś Caityabhūto Bhavet' and the Mahāyāna Cult of the Book." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 50 (2007): 101–43. For books used as ritual objects, see Hartmann, "From Words to Books," pp. 101-104.

[149] Although the date of composition is a question, the consistency between the rules of the various *Prātimokṣa*-s probably indicates an earlier rather than later relatively fixed set of rules. Differences do

methods and technologies. It is this type of response to urbanization and modernity that allowed Buddhism to be more than a group of wandering forest ascetics.[150]

Long ago, Thapar categorized renunciation, the primary feature of Buddhism and Jainism, as counter-culture.[151] For her, a renouncer was respected on the societal level because of his (or her) persistent devotion to leave all, or, at the very least, some aspects of society. More recently, Olivelle has described śramaṇic asceticism as "anti-culture" rather than counter-culture "because renunciation, which became the most common form of Indian asceticism, did not intend to replace the established culture with a different cultural system, or even to offer an alternative."[152] As such, asceticism[153] was not, at this point in time, a movement of social reform. He continues, "Indeed, the 'anti-culture' of renunciation can only exist in opposition to, and, therefore, dependent on the culture of society." Buddhism, from the very beginning as tradition would have it, was a religion of societal subsistence. Where the goal of counter-culture is to replace society with another, the goal of Buddhism was to exist within a wealthy society whereby the members of that

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exist, such as in the *Pācittiya* and *Sekhiya* sections, but are relatively minor. For an overview, see K R Norman *Pāli Literature*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1983, pp. 18-22.

[150] Unfortunately, the academic vigor applied to the study of Indian Buddhism for nearly two centuries has not been replicated in the study of Jainism, although much recent work suggests that Jainism may have impacted Early Historic Period religious culture just as much if not even more so than Buddhism, tragically resulting in a biased understanding of some of the earliest religious practices we have extant evidence for in South Asia. See, for instance, Benjamin Schonthal. "Untangling Uposatha." *Sagar* 10 (2006): 51–65 and Christian Haskett. "Uposatha and Posaha in the Early Histories of Jainism and Buddhism." *Śramana* 62, no. 1 (2011): 39–52 who each re-investigate the relationship between confession (*uposatha*) in both Buddhism and Jainism. Consequently, because of an ongoing neglect of Jaina sources, our description of śramaṇic religion may not be entirely accurate. Nevertheless, continuing with the broad strokes painted in this chapter, it is necessary to summarize some of what is known to better understand early Buddhism.

[151] Romila Thapar. "Renunciation: The Making of a Counter-Culture?" In *Ancient Indian Social History*, edited by Romila Thapar, 63–104, New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 1978.

[152] Patrick Olivelle. *Ascetics and Brahmins*, London: Anthem Press, 2011, p. 45.

[153] I take Freiberger's definition of asceticism, that it is a "combination of actual practices and a set of beliefs on which the practices are based and which justify them." *Asceticism and Its Critics*. Edited by

society could support the practices and lifestyles of the monastics, who in return gave something back to the society, namely mediation between the tangible world (where suffering exists) and the intangible world (where suffering is extinguished).

Buddhist monasticism is a form of renunciation, although typically does not involve extreme self-mortification. Several interpretations of Buddhist monasticism have emerged over the years.[154] Some scholars, especially early excavators and art historians like James Fergusson, James Burgess, and Sir Alexander Cunningham, described Buddhist monasteries as retreats where monastics could take leave to meditate and engage in co-learning of religious texts[155]. Other scholars, such as Thapar and Himanshu P. Ray, treated Early Historic Period Buddhist monasteries as important economic centers.[156] Monasteries promoted local agricultural production and facilitated trade along the Uttarāpatha and Dakṣināpatha capillaries. Lars Fogelin's recent work on Early Historic Period Thotlakonda monastery in modern day Andhra Pradesh led him to argue that the "monastery and local populations were actively engaged, both economically and ritually, with each other."[157] Lay laborers routinely assisted in generating and producing subsistence for the monastics while receiving teachings and/or merit in return. They lived nearby but not inside the monastery. Despite daily economic and ritual engagement with each other, the monks lived separately and were largely contained out of sight from the

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Oliver Freiberger, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006 p. 7. The volume, edited by Freiberger, provides a comprehensive contemporary academic introduction to the topic of asceticism.

[154] A summary of these positions may be found throughout Fogelin, *Archaeology of Early Buddhism*, Lanham. They are briefly summarized here for context.

[155] See Fogelin, *Archaeology of Early Buddhism,* p. 4ff.

[156] Romila Thapar. *Early India*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002; Ray, *Monastery and Guild*; Lahiri, *The Archaeology of Indian Trade Routes Up to C. 200 BC*; Heitzman, *Gifts of Power*.

[157] Fogelin*, Archaeology of Early Buddhism,* p. 7.

general populous. Therefore, Fogelin concluded that, at least at Thotlakonda, monasteries functioned as both retreats and economic centers. This conclusion, derived almost exclusively from archaeological evidence interpreted by an archaeologist, also supports the notion of Buddhist renunciation as anti-culture[158] due to the symbiotic relationship between not only the *saṁgha* and the laity but also between economic and monastic concerns.

Despite the existence of Buddhism prior to Aśoka, the earliest secure references to Buddhism and material remnants of Buddhism's existence come from the Mauryan period. Some of Aśoka's edicts were written on pillars in places where the Buddhists either already inhabited or began to inhabit quickly thereafter. We know this because of inscriptional references found at Sanchi and Sarnath. There the Aśokan edicts refer directly to a *saṁgha* and warned against schism thus suggesting that at the time of inscribing Buddhism existed as some known, detectable entity, namely as an institution, or, more probably, as a burgeoning institution. The impact of Aśoka and the Mauryas changed the face of South Asia by inspiring new revolutions which can be categorized in two groups: material advances, meaning urbanization, large, permanent structures, surpluses of food, and socio-religious cultural shifts. Many previous scholars discussed the changing landscape during this period and have introduced various categories by

[158] Olivelle found that renunciation as a phenomenon was, since the very beginning, always on the fringes of society. He summarizes: "Although the historical development of the Vedic religion may explain certain of its aspects, renunciation erupted into the religio-cultural tradition of India as a totally new and unique phenomenon. It represented an anti-structure to the society of that time, a total rejection and the reversal of the value system of the world. Precisely for this reason, it was never totally assimilated into the structures of orthodox society or integrated into the framework of the orthodox doctrine of society. Orthodox thinkers were always ill at ease in dealing with renunciation, so foreign not only to their way of life but also to their framework of thought." See *Ascetics and Brahmins*, p. 70.

which to analyze and situate religion. Sanchi is an embodiment of the Mauryan impact on Early Historic Period cultural shifts since Aśoka's pillar seems to have commenced construction at the site. The pillar is very much the center of the site, even disrupting the symmetry of *stūpa* 1 which is no longer arranged according to a true north-south-east-west axis because the pillar would have blocked the true south *toraṇa* entrance. The enlargement of the *vedikā* and the subsequent Common Era *toraṇa* shifted the monument's exist slightly to the west to accommodate Aśoka's pillar.

Romila Thapar's older work recognized the importance of urbanization on the changing religious landscape. She noted that the Vedic backdrop prior to Buddhism, and, indeed, Aśoka, manufactured and maintained a close-knit relationship between *brāhmaṇa*-s and *kṣatriya*-s through *yajña*.[159] This relationship was one of interdependence whereby the *kṣatriya*-s supported the *brāhmaṇa*-s with donations. As a result, religion was a top-down enterprise dominated primarily by the wealthy *kṣatriya*-s and the priestly *brāhmaṇa*-s who secured their own prosperity and livelihood with blessings and magical incantations made to the soteriological benefit of the *kṣatriya*-s. With time, as agriculture, urbanism, surplus, increased trade (and undoubtedly migrations of peoples and ideas), new ideas challenged this setup, at least in North India where Thapar focused, intentionally or not. The *Upaniṣad*-s posited individual religious practices while devaluing the old *yajña* system. As a result, along with the decrease in traditional occupations such as cattle herding, wealthy new classes of traders were motivated to tamper with the old Vedic dependency upon *brāhmaṇa*-s. The transmission

[159] Romila Thapar. "Sacrifice, Surplus, and the Soul." *History of Religions* 33, no. 4 (1994): 305–24.

of wealth and soteriological blessings were no longer strictly between the *brāhmaṇa*-s and whosoever could afford them (like powerful *kṣatriya*-s). Instead, some *kṣatriya*-s placed their wealth and faith into new systems of thought that were much more appealing to the general population. The Buddha, being himself a *kṣatriya* according to the available biographical texts, is something of an example of this shift in classical patronage as he was quite literally born to have a role in the system one way or another. As discussed elsewhere, the Buddha (or at least the later writers who ingeniously attributed doctrines to him) reinterpreted many of the old Vedic terminologies, including *yajña* and *dāna*, to appeal to new generations of religious seekers who were already familiar, at least somewhat, with what these concepts would have meant. Most important to the Buddhists prior to the Common Era, especially within the context of patronage, is *dāna*. Not only is *dāna* an essential practice of Buddhists described in literature but the very word is used in the Sanchi donative epigraphy to describe the charity expressed by individual and groups of donors at Buddhist monuments

The Sanskrit noun *dāna* (also used in Prakrit) derives from the verb √dā, "to give," and can refer to giving as an action or a physical gift. *Dāna* as both a gift and the act of giving begins from the earliest times in India with the *Ṛg Veda*.[160] The close link between rituals and gift exchange need not be discussed here[161] but it is safe to say that *Dānastuti* hymns in the *Ṛg Veda* glorified patrons who gave gifts (called *dakṣiṇā*) as they

[160] See, also, Ellison Banks Findly. *Dāna*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 2003. Findly correctly examines Buddhism as philosophically indebted to these earlier Vedic concepts.
[161] Jan Gonda. *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion*, The Hague: Mouton, 1965, pp. 198-228 and Jan CHeesterman. *The Inner Conflict of Tradition*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.

will obtain renown.[162] Other non-*śramaṇa* texts, such as the *Mahābhārata* or the *Dānakhaṇḍa*, discuss *dāna* in much of the same way. In this literature, dāna is always a ritual with six *aṅga*-s, or constituents, i.e., the donor (*dātṛ*), donee (*pratigrahitṛ*), charitable attitude (*śraddhā*), gift subject (*deyaṁ*), and a proper time and place (*deśakālo*). The literal gift to priests functions as a payment for a ritual or sacrifice. Romila Thapar studied how this changed with urbanization and the expansion of kingdoms, which in turn changed societal customs.[163]

The advent of Buddhism added new layers to this rite. Some scholars suggest that new sources of wealth and the emergence of influential householders (*gahapatis*)[164] helped Buddhism to take advantage of access new financial networks. The innovation saw the rise of reciprocity whereby monastic Buddhists provided opportunities to the laity for merit making.[165] The ritual now involved two parties who gave equally to each other. Material donations to the *saṁgha* led to spiritual merit (*puṇya*) bestowed upon the donor. In some cases, it could be distributed to family members, monastic teachers, or even, eventually, "all beings."[166] Buddhism's re-interpretation and deployment of *dāna* became part of what I call the "Buddha's genius," which is a concise way to describe how Buddhism introduced new philosophical concepts using old words and ideas. In that way,

[162] Panduranga Vamana Kane. *History of Dharmaśāstra*. Vol. 2, Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Institute, 1974, pp. 838-839.
[163] Romila Thapar. *Cultural Pasts*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. 521-2.
[164] Uma Chakravarti. *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism*, Delhi; New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
[165] Findly, *Dāna*.
[166] Gregory Schopen. *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997, p. 36.

śramaṇic religion was something familiar yet new.[167] The monuments at Sanchi are just one example of a shifting view on *dāna*, a subject I take up much more thoroughly in Chapter 3 when I outline two donative epigraphic formulae that utilize the concept of *dāna* to the *saṁgha* in different ways.

1.5 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

Throughout this dissertation I synthesize a variety of material for the sake of comprehending the early history of Indian Buddhist monastic institutionalization. In Chapter 2, I provide an overview of Sanchi as an archaeological site, its history, and its historiography. I also discuss why Sanchi is relevant to the larger picture of studying early Indian Buddhist material culture. Chapter 3 concerns the donative epigraphy of Indian Buddhism and my own findings. There I analyze patterns derived through the epigraphy and pay close attention to the networks that emerge from the data. The story of institutionalization continues with this data to assist in filling in the gaps when the literature is unable to communicate historical information. I give special attention to an approximate chronology of the donative inscriptions, noting significant changes in style, content, and location over time. Chapter 4 focuses on a few specific patrons found throughout the donative epigraphy and analyzes them as charismatic leaders. In particular, a single group—potentially linked together by their mutual ancestry—may have been intimately responsible for Sanchi (and indeed Bharhut) coming to be centers

[167] In the same vein, the Buddha also called his new tradition dharma, probably intentionally to blur the lines between what was new and what was tradition. See Patrick Olivelle. "Ascetic Withdrawal or Social Engagement." In *Religions of India in Practice*, edited by Donald S Lopez Jr, 543–46, 1995 for a brief comment on the question of dharma during the Early Historic Period. For a deeper understanding of the

for pilgrimage and institutionalization. This possible group of kin may be traced using their metronymic Gotiputa. Not only did they enshrine themselves as objects of veneration alongside the Buddha at Sanchi but they could have been chiefly responsibly for providing colossal amounts of patronage beforehand. I argue that this family and others like it rooted Buddhism firmly in areas outside of Magadha, the Buddhist heartland. Chapter 5 surveys attitudes towards patronage and wealth in normative monastic literature, specifically the Pāli canon's Vinaya and Sūtra literature since it represents a general picture of Mainstream Buddhism. There the story begins with the monks' own perspective, which I believe changes over time for material reasons that can best be explored and potentially explained with evidence accumulated in Chapter 3. Finally, in my concluding Chapter 6, I bring the elements of the story together and hypothesize a new historical model for early Indian Buddhism.

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history and role of *dharma* in shaping Indian religions, see the volume edited by Olivelle: *Dharma*. Delhi:

CHAPTER 2

SANCHI

2.1 OVERVIEW

The history of the Sanchi *saṁgha* is in many ways the history of Indian Buddhism. Some of our earliest surviving monuments and records may be found at Sanchi and it was inhabited until Buddhism's decline in India. Similarly, the history of studying Sanchi in many ways characterizes the history of studying Indian Buddhism. The decipherment of the Mauryan *brāhmī* script by James Prinsep came from studying the many small, short inscriptions dotting the monuments. I am now using those very same inscriptions to produce new arguments concerning the development of the Buddhist institution and its relationship to economic prosperity. For various reasons—may it be because of its nearly unrivaled early Buddhist relief art, reliquaries, or even its by-chance high level of preservation—Sanchi has long been the subject of academic fascination.

In this chapter, I will discuss Sanchi's landscape and its archaeological and epigraphic history. In doing so, I will cover the essential literature that has been written on the Buddhist activity in and around Sanchi. I believe it is important to be transparent about what is and is not available for study at Sanchi, particularly with the inscriptions since they are my primary evidence. Afterwards, I will consider Sanchi's relevance for some new directions in the study of Indian Buddhism, particularly the 'materialist turn' in studying the history of religion. Throughout, I attempt to acknowledge how the specter of Colonial excavation and preservation continue to act upon contemporary investigations

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Motilal Banarsidass, 2009.

like my own. At its core, what is presented here is the background to set up later discussions of the monastic Buddhist enterprise as it manifests from studying the Sanchi epigraphy despite the limited amount of available data. Because many specifics regarding the *saṁgha* continue to be unknown or shrouded in obscurity, such as which *vinaya* was used, where the monastics lived during the earliest period, why there were no monks or nuns depicted in the relief art, who was in charge of organizing and administrating the everyday needs of the community let alone the monumental construction projects, etc., it is essential to be transparent about what is available for study, how it is has been previously studied, and what we might expect to gain from exploring and re-exploring Sanchi and its body of evidence. In my view, a deep examination of the extant epigraphy goes far in filling in some historical blanks and, at the very least, provides a starting point for generating scholarly content about Sanchi and its *saṁgha* or *saṁgha*-s for the history of Indian Buddhist religion.

2.2 AN INTRODUCTION TO SANCHI

Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site of India in 1989, Sanchi resides outside the heartland of Buddhist history. Located nearly 2,200 kilometers from Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh, and some 2,800 kilometers from Bodh Gaya in Bihar, Sanchi is an unlikely location for early Indian Buddhist history because of its distance from Magadha. Emperor Aśoka's (c. 273-236 B.C.E.) patronage may be one possible reason for the site's early growth and construction of monumental structures. According to legend, before he became emperor. Aśoka accepted the position as Viceroy of the Mauryan Empire

headquartered in Vidisha. Vidisha served as a focal point for the Mauryan Empire because it was a large city centrally positioned along a major trade route. Northern Black Polished Ware associated with the city's ancient rampart shows the city's earliest urban occupation occurred around the time of the Mauryas.

According to the *Mahāvaṁsa*, it was while serving as viceroy in Vidisha where Aśoka met his wife and discovered its strategic importance for the imperial agenda due to location along both the northern and southern trade routes.[168] Later, as a convert to Buddhism, Aśoka famously opened seven of the eight original *stūpa*-s erected over the bodily relics of Śākyamuni Buddha. He distributed the relics and built 84,000 *stūpa*-s across his empire.[169] One such *stūpa* might be the large *stūpa* now resting at the pinnacle of the Sanchi hilltop, as indicated by an Aśokan pillar near its south gateway. The pillar bears an inscription warning expulsion to dissident monks. According to local legend, to honor his beloved wife, and presumably, to provide seclusion for Buddhist monks, Aśoka founded Sanchi, which was also the home of many local religious cults, especially Nāga and brāhmaṇical ones. The famous Besnagar pillar inscription of Heliodorus described the Greek man Heliodorus as a devotee of Viṣṇu and probably dates to the late 2nd century BCE.[170]

Besides Aśoka's history with the region, Sanchi also sat between the large urban, trade centers Vidisha and Ujjain. The overflow of wealth passing between Vidisha and

[168] Debala Mitra. *Sanchi*, New Delhi: Director General of Archaeology in India, 2001, p. 5.
[169] John S Strong. *The Legend of King Aśoka*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983, p. 219ff.
[170] A useful study of Nāga cults and some of their possible relationships to early Buddhist groups, including the early institution at Sanchi is DeCaroli, *Haunting the Buddha*. Julia Shaw has studied Nāga imagery at Sanchi directly: Shaw, "Nāga Sculptures in Sanchi's Archaeological Landscape."

Ujjain undoubtedly gave the religious community a great advantage in seeking donations, evidenced by the numerous donations recorded in stone at Sanchi. The establishment of a religious center on Sanchi's hilltop may have been as much economically motivated as it was spiritually.[171]

Additionally, Sanchi's fertile landscape warranted the construction of several water tanks and dams.[172] The local agricultural community may have relied on the water stored at Sanchi to grow crops and maintain their lifestyles through a mutually symbiotic relationship with the Buddhist monastic community.[173] Dams and tanks dating to the last centuries BCE were key features in the relationship between the monastic Buddhists on the hilltops and the farmers below. Irrigation canals were built for distribution.[174] Put simply, the monks could have provided religious services and water as the laity provided

[171] Sanchi was not without competition, as at least one pre-existing tradition already discovered the fortunes of residing between Vidisha and Ujjain. Sometime before most stone monuments were built at Sanchi, the aforementioned Heliodorus pillar in Vidisha was raised. This freestanding monolithic pillar records the erection of a *garuḍa-dhvaja*, or "Garuḍa emblem," by Heliodorus the Greek from Takṣaśilā. Heliodorus was a brāhmaṇical devotee, sent by the *mahārāja* Antialkidas. This early brāhmaṇical inscription clearly shows that Vidisha was already associated with the Vasudeva, the *devadevasa*, or "god of gods." The Heliodorus pillar evidences Vidisha's non-Buddhist importance before, or at the same time as, the widespread creation of stone Buddhist monuments on the Sanchi hilltop. On paleographic grounds, the Heliodorus pillar is assigned an approximate date of c. 150 BCE. A summary of arguments may be found in Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 141, 265ff.

[172] Shaw*, Buddhist Landscapes in Central India,* p. 233. She says that those from the ancient period are quite distinguishable from more recent village tanks.

[173] Shaw*, Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*, pp. 252-3. She discussed "service villages" (*aramīkagāma*) in the *Cūlavaṃsa* (V. 46.115). They provided labor to monasteries and met the nutritional needs of its inhabitants.

[174] Shaw*, Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*, pp. 239-40. Regarding control structures, Shaw says: "The dams are usually pierced by a stream channel at their deepest point…the natural drainage point for the dam catchment…masonry remains, attesting to some kind of monumentalized control structure, have been found in the feeder streams of the four highest dam sites [of Sanchi, Devrajpur, Morel Kala, and Ferozpur]."

donations, food, and labor.[175] Therefore, a mutually dependent relationship formed between the monastic Buddhists on top of the hill and the laity below.

Sanchi was not the only major religious center in the region. Located in a radius of about 15 kilometers around the Sanchi hilltop are innumerable Buddhist and non-Buddhist sites. Cunningham discovered four large Buddhist sites before the 1854 publication of *The Bhilsa Topes*.[176] These sites are now known as Satdhara, Sonari, Andher, and Morel Khurd (previously Bhojpur). Each large subsidiary site resembles the Sanchi hilltop: one centralized, major *stūpa* with smaller *stūpa*-s and temples in proximity.[177]

The Sanchi Hilltop - Monuments and Features

The archaeological site we refer to as Sanchi rests primarily along a large hill just outside of a small local village. Throughout its history, Sanchi was previously referred to as Kākaṇāya, Kākaṇāva, or Kākanādaboṭa in later inscriptional records and Cetiyagiri or Vedisagiri in the *Mahāvaṁsa* and *Dīpavaṁsa*. Although there is much more to be excavated throughout the site, the uncovered monuments and features may be placed into two groups: those on the hilltop and those on the western slope along the "old path," which is now blockaded by the ASI. These monuments and features form the standard vision of the site even though the site's importance extends far beyond what can be

[175] See Fogelin, *Archaeology of Early Buddhism*. In his study of Thotlakonda monastery, some of the local population was employed by the monastic community to perform a number of services.
[176] Alfred Cunningham. *The Bhilsa Topes, or, Buddhist Monuments of Central India*, London: Smith, Elder and Co., 65 Cornhill, 1854.
[177] This basic pattern is deceiving. *Stūpa* 2 at Sanchi is located partially down the side of the hill. As further archaeology has shown, there were indeed other monuments—specifically *stūpa*-s—built on the sides of the hill.

readily seen on only the hilltop.[178] The hilltop contains three primary areas: the Main Terrace, the Eastern Area, and the Southern Area. Each monument was numbered by John Marshall during his excavations beginning in 1912.[179] For pilgrims and other visitors, the main terrace containing the impressive Great Stūpa is the main attraction because of its size, artistry, and imbued meaning as a host for the Buddha's relics.

The Main Terrace contains *stūpa* 1 (often called the Great Stūpa), its enormous monumental railing (*vedikā*), and high, ornamented gateways (*toraṇa*-s). Its diameter is 120 feet and its height is 54 feet. Many donative inscriptions line the *vedikā* and *toraṇa*-s and are visible to visitors at eye-level while the *toraṇa*-s feature various illustrations from the *Jātaka*-s and other famous scenes known from Buddhist lore. Immediately south of *stūpa* 1's south *toraṇa* is one of the most important features of the site: the Aśokan pillar. Numbered pillar 10 by Marshall distinguish it from other free standing pillars, none of which were found *in-situ*, the pillar's contents match the Aśokan inscription and pillar at Sarnath. The inscription warns against schism within the *saṁgha*. The capital is now housed in the local museum at the bottom of the hill. The pillar is comprised of Chunar sandstone. Other pillars found on the Main Terrace date to later periods, some of which contain Gupta-era inscriptions which are now heavily damaged.

Also on the Main Terrace is *stūpa* 3, which once contained the relics of the Buddha's disciples Sāriputa and Mahāmogalāna,[180] and its fractured *vedikā* and single *toraṇa*. Situated immediately north-east of *stūpa* 1, *stūpa* 3 is much smaller, standing

[178] Although one might look to any number of sources for a basic introduction to the major monuments and features at Sanchi, we may cite Debala Mitra. *Buddhist Monuments*, Calcutta: Sahitya Samsad, 1971; Madhukar K Dhavalikar. *Sanchi*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003; and Debala Mitra. *Sanchi*.
[179] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*.

only 27 feet high and only 49 feet in diameter, making it roughly half the size of *stūpa* 1. *Stūpa* 3 has been subject to less restoration and preservation than *stūpa* 1. Many other *stūpa*-s are found on the Main Terrace but have received considerably less scholarly attention, possibly because they are overshadowed by *stūpa* 1 and its *toraṇa* art work. However, some of these various smaller *stūpa*-s once contained reliquaries or were augmented to hold images. For example, although now a pile of rubble, *stūpa* 12, dated to the Gupta period, contained a niche for an image of Maitreya and *stūpa* 14 contained another for the Buddha in *dhyāna-mudrā*.

Several miscellaneous buildings were found on the Main Terrace. Temple 18, now an apsidal structure from the 7th century CE, was built upon the remains of a 2nd century BCE building. It sits upon a raised platform just south of *stūpa* 1. Originally, the temple was ornamented with twelve pillars with architraves. During excavation, many terracottas were found bearing images of the Buddha, *stūpa*-s, and short inscriptions beginning with the typical *ye dharmā hetuprabhavā…* formula. A number of other temples or buildings lay throughout the Main Terrace but not all are well preserved or identifiable for visitors to the site.

The Eastern Area sits upon a raised terrace east of the eastern *toraṇa* from *stūpa* 1. There are a number of Gupta-era and early medieval monasteries and several temples. Building 45 is fascinating because it contains a large temple inside the remains of a cell-lined monastery built probably around the 7th century CE. The inside temple was recently studied by Fiona Buckee and she concluded that the temple, due to its curved *śikhara* and

[180] For a discussion of this reliquary and all others in the vicinity, see Willis, *Buddhist Reliquaries.*

architectural design, was a typical north-Indian Latina temple and did not align with descriptions of temple dimensions found in Vastuśāstra. Rather, Temple 45 was built over several generations that may have had different, often competing views of what the temple and its superstructure should have looked like, especially given that the religious landscape of the region was increasingly favoring Hindu and Jaina style temples.[181]

The Southern Area of the hilltop is not actually oriented due south of *stūpa* 1 but rather to the southwest of *stūpa* 1's southern *toraṇa*. In addition to a number of Common Era monasteries and one building (no. 8) whose function is not known, noteworthy here is Temple 40, which potentially dated back as far as the Mauryan period, although only fragments remain because it was burnt down completely sometime before the 2nd century BCE. The current remains sit on a high rectangular stone platform with two stepped approaches. There once existed a circumambulatory path but today only the surviving standing pillars indicate the structure's usage. The pillars date to the 7th century CE when the structure was repurposed as a hall.

The last area on the Sanchi hilltop is the Western Slope, oriented due west from *stūpa* 1's western *toraṇa*. The old path has been reconstructed with local stones. The immense monastery 51, dating to the 2nd or 3rd century CE, is a prototypical quadrangle monastery with cells on the outer edge, a courtyard, and a verandah. Much further down the path is *stūpa* 2, the second most important monument for the purposes of this dissertation. Its measurements are similar to *stūpa* 3 however it does not possess a *toraṇa*. Nevertheless, the *vedikā* is well-preserved and heavily ornamented with bas-relief

[181] Her observations, measurements, and conclusions can be found in Fiona Buckee. "The Design of the

representations. The original *stūpa* and *vedikā* likely date to the early 2nd century BCE but the ground *vedikā* and the upper, berm *vedikā* date to later periods based on the donative inscriptions and artistry.[182] The epigraphy as well as the artistry have been compared and contrasted to the Bharhut *stūpa vedikā* and gateways. Significantly, when opened by the British, the core of *stūpa* 2 yielded a number of reliquaries with inscriptions. According to the inscriptions, which I return to later, *stūpa* 2 was meant to venerate a number of prominent Buddhists who seemed to have assisted in developing Buddhism regionally, most of whom were likely famous monastic teachers. In and around *stūpa* 2 and between *stūpa* 2 and monastery 51 are the remains of many smaller *stūpa*-s which have not been fully reconstructed by the ASI. It is very likely that if excavated fully, the western slope would yield many other buildings, fragments, and potentially more inscriptions.

2.3 ARCHAEOLOGY AT SANCHI

According to J.A.S. Burgess,[183] General Taylor of the Bengal Cavalry was the first British officer to record a visit to Sanchi. In 1818, during a campaign against the Pindharas, he noticed that three large gateways were standing and that the southern gateway had fallen. The dome of *stūpa* 1 was largely untouched and even had many portions of the balustrade *in-situ*. *Stūpa* 2 was also undisturbed. The dome of *stūpa* 3 was in good standing condition; however, its lone gateway had fallen. Taylor saw eight other

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Spire From Temple 45 at Sanchi." *South Asian Studies* 30, no. 1 (2014): 69–102.

[182] I discuss the dating of the *stūpa* 2 donative inscriptions heavily in Chapter 3.

[183] J A S Burgess. "The Great Stūpa at Sāñchi-Kānākheḍā." *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1902, 29–45.

stūpa-s but he did not record their condition. Burgess suspects that Taylor believed the monuments were undisturbed for many years.

Mr. Herbert Maddock, Political Agent at Bhopal, obtained permission from the government in 1822 to "dig" into the two large *stūpa*-s. Seeking treasure, Maddock and a Captain Johnson, the Agent's assistant, dug into *stūpa* 1 "from the top to what he believed to be the bottom of the foundation."[184] They claimed to not find any open spaces. *Stūpa* 2 was "also half destroyed by the same bungling amateur antiquaries…they also probably completed the ruin of the other minor monuments previously unnoticed by the few visitors." Later, after these amateur blunders, a number of serious observers recorded numerous plates and sent them to James Prinsep, coin-assayer for the East India Company, for analysis.[185]

In 1849, the Government of India ordered Lieutenant F.C Maisey to Sanchi. He prepared an illustrated account of the *stūpa*-s, sculptures, and known inscriptions. In 1850, Maisey met Alexander Cunningham, Major General in the British army and then-amateur archaeologist. He corroborated with Cunningham and visited Sanchi for the first time in 1851. During his seven-week stint with Maisey, Cunningham began repairs on *stūpa* 3, which was wrecked in 1822. In their repairs, they found stone boxes, inscribed with "*ma*" and "*sa*," referencing the famous Maudgalyāyana and Śāriputra from Buddhist literature.[186] They sunk a shaft into *stūpa* 2 and found an inscribed stone box enclosing

[184] Burgess, "The Great Stūpa at Sāñchi-Kānākheḍā," p. 34.
[185] Brian H. Hodgson in 1824 sent two to Prinsep. Dr. Spilsbury sent him a drawing of a gateway sculpture in 1835. In 1837, Captain E. Smith copied and sent Prinsep twenty-five inscriptions and Captain W. Murray sent more drawings, specifically of the lower architrave of the south gateway.
[186] Cunningham sank a shaft into *stūpa* 3 and discovered a large stone lid 5ft. long. Underneath were two stone boxes with inscriptions that read simply "Mahāmogalānasa" and "[S]ā[r]i[putasa]." Admittedly, the

four steatite inscribed caskets with the names of famous early Buddhist saints and teachers from the area.[187] The two also sunk a shaft into *stūpa* 1 but, as their predecessors had discovered, nothing was there.[188]

Three years later, Cunningham published *The Bhilsa Topes*.[189] His book was the first useful description of the Sanchi region, but is of limited use in terms of its theories. Cunningham worked with Georg Bühler on re-translating the known inscriptions. Between 1881 and 1912 H.H. Cole and others undertook minor restoration and clearing of vegetation. In 1912, John Marshall began the largest excavation and restoration project at Sanchi. Despite the many problems of the early visitors, Marshall's work was quite successful for its time.

Marshall published a three-volume set, *The Monuments of Sāñchī* in 1940 that remains the most comprehensive and authoritative work on the Sanchi main site.[190] Marshall developed a six-phase sequence beginning in the third century BCE and continuing until the twelve century CE, shown in Table 2.1.

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second inscription is not in good shape, but Cunningham and Marshall were able to corroborate the names because reliquaries from Satdhara near Sanchi also bear inscriptions with the duo's names. Originally, Cunningham believed these reliquaries confirmed an Aśokan date for *stūpa* 3 because of the legend that Aśoka opened and distributed relics all throughout India. However, Marshall could not find a reason to date the *stūpa* earlier than the middle of the 2nd century BCE. Inside Sāriputa's box were seven beads and charred bone. Inside Mahāmogalāna's box was only two small pieces of bone. The lids of the reliquaries each bore inscriptions of the corresponding monk: 'ma' and 'sa.' Cunningham, *The Bhilsa Topes*, p. 297. Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*. Vol. 1, p. 296. Willis discussed the locations of the reliquaries in *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India,* p. 81.

[187] See Michael D.Willis. "Buddhist Saints in Ancient Vedisa." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 11, no. 2 (2001): 219–28; and *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India.*

[188] Given the sketchy nature of the early endeavors to recover relics and the shadowy nature of their so-called reports, we cannot leave out the suggestion that Maisey and Cunningham's predecessors found remains, removed them, and sold them for a profit.

[189] Cunningham, *The Bhilsa Topes.*

[190] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī.*

Phase #	Approximate Years	Period
Phase 1	300 – 200 B.C.E.	Mauryan
Phase 2[191]	200 B.C.E. – 100 C.E.	Post-Mauryan / Śuṅgan
Phase 3	100 C.E. – 300 C.E.	Sātavāhana/Kṣatrapa
Phase 4	500 – 600 C.E.	Gupta
Phases 5+	600 C.E. – 1200 C.E.	Post-Gupta

Table 2.1: Construction Periods of the Sanchi Hill

In the same volumes, epigraphist N.G. Majumdar wrote a chapter on all the known inscriptions from Sanchi and its aforementioned subsidiary sites.[192] To date, Majumdar's study of the inscriptions serves as the basis for nearly all scholarly works concerning Sanchi's epigraphy, although for the purposes of this dissertation I have created my own database of Sanchi's epigraphy with corrections and additions, some of which are based on Tsukamoto's volumes.[193] The inscriptions are discussed in greater detail in 2.8 below.

Marshall's volume one contained a description of the monuments, up to when Marshall was writing while Alfred Foucher discussed and interpreted Sanchi's sculptures. Majumdar's chapter on inscriptions concluded the first volume. Majumdar labeled the inscriptions according to their location. In volumes two and three Marshall published numerous plates of all the gateways, balustrades, miscellaneous fragments, and rubbings of the *brāhmī* inscriptions.

[191] Phase 2 is the Early Historic Period in which this dissertation operates. The ground balustrade of *stūpa* 1 dates to the middle of Phase 2, while the four gateways are slightly later.

[192] Included in his list are the Aśokan pillar, reliquary inscriptions, donative inscriptions from the balustrades, and Gupta-period land grants.

[193] For previous work on the Sanchi inscriptions using Marshall and Majumdar, see Vidya Dehejia. "The Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage: Sacred Monuments, 100 BC-AD 250." In *The Powers of Art*, edited by Barbara Stoler Miller, 35–45, Delhi; New York: OUP, 1992; Upinder Singh. "Sanchi: the History of the Patronage of an Ancient Buddhist Establishment." *Indian Economic & Social History Review* 33, no. 1 (March 1, 1996): 1–35.

Since Marshall, there have been several serious attempts at excavation and survey. In 1936, Hamid uncovered a large monastery directly west of *stūpa* 1.[194] In 1995-6, the Archaeological Survey of India cleared a cluster of small *stūpa*-s southwest of *stūpa* 1, outside the designated tourist boundary. A stairway built into Building 8 was recently uncovered.[195] S.B. Ota cleared other sections east of *stūpa* 1 and revealed paving stones and other small features. P.K. Mukherjee unearthed a seventh century monastery cluster. Sadly, both Ota and Mukherjee's excavations have yet to be published and are only available in the ASI's Bhopal office.[196]

British archaeologist Julia Shaw did the most significant recent work. She began the Sanchi Survey Project (SSP) in 1998. She aimed to "move beyond" the ritual landscape to "an examination of the archaeological landscape as a whole." She did not see sites in the same geographical region as existing in isolation; rather, they were interconnected insofar as they shared resources, populations, and goals. Her massive survey project stretched from the Sanchi hill proper to sites nearly 25km away. In sum, over 750km^2 were surveyed. She reports that 35 new Buddhist sites, 145 settlements, 17 irrigation works, and over 1,000 sculpture and temple fragments were documented during the two six-month seasons between 1998 and 2000.[197] Shaw's work postulates an early Indian Buddhist landscape where monks, nuns, farmers, local patrons, merchants, and

[194] See Mohammad Hamid. "Excavation at Sanchi." *Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India* 37 (1936): 85–87.
[195] Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*. In chapters 9 and 11 she believes this previously misunderstood building was used as a viewing platform to see the other hilltop sites in the area. Similar platforms have been found at the other corresponding sites.
[196] Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*, p. 21.
[197] Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*, p. 20.

others, were economically linked through large and ever-expanding interdependent exchange networks.

A separate, influential observation stemming from her work in the region links the sacred landscape in and around Sanchi through inter-visibility.[198] With some variance, all the major *stūpa* sites in the vicinity of Sanchi, like Andher, Satdhara, and Sonari, rest on hilltops. Shaw has hypothesized that platformed monasteries during the Early Historic Period were used to view the *stūpa*-s in other locations, not too far off in the distance. If Sanchi *stūpa* 1, for instance, did contain relics of the Buddha, being able to "see" the *stūpa* from a distant monastery might be a source of piety and contemplative inspiration. Likewise, Shaw argued that the strangely staggered placement of the *stūpa*-s at Satdhara and Sonari indicated that they could have been admired from a distance.[199] Vision of the distant *stūpa*-s from the platformed monasteries in a variety of locations also may have served in another role: protection. Shaw connected the positions of the unique architectural features with textual references to the guardianship and protection of relics.[200]

In a creative recent article, Shaw reviewed historical models of Buddhist propagation and utilized the data from the SSP to argue that by the 2nd century BCE, "the *saṅgha* formed part of an interdependent economy with close parallels to systems of monastic landlordism known in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia." She continued, "Lay support of the *saṅgha* was essential to the latter's survival, but practice services provided

[198] Julia Shaw. "The Sacred Landscape." In *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India*, edited by Michael D Willis, Joe Cribb, and Julia Shaw, 27–36, London: British Museum Press, 2000.
[199] Shaw, "The Sacred Landscape," p. 30.
[200] Shaw, "The Sacred Landscape," p. 35.

by the monastery, in this case, water for domestic and agricultural use, formed the backbone to changing social and economic conditions…"[201] A 'domesticated' monasticism, therefore, was already firmly integrated into the Buddhist socio-economic milieu by the 2nd century and contributed to the establishment of the widespread patronage networks studied in-depth here in this dissertation.

2.4 EPIGRAPHY AND SANCHI

Theoretical Considerations

Investigating India's extensive epigraphic corpus has become increasingly popular amongst scholars and has led to many innovative and controversial conclusions about the historical past.[202] Previously, at sites like Sanchi, much attention was given to the art and what was or was not present in the image exemplified in the debate over 'aniconism' between Vidya Dehejia and Susan Huntington.[203] Works heavily focusing on narrative

[201] Julia Shaw. "Archaeologies of Buddhist Propagation in Ancient India." *World Archaeology* 45, no. 1: 83–108, see, in particular, her conclusion on p. 103.

[202] Several excellent examples of using epigraphy to study Indian history include: Cynthia Talbot. *Precolonial India in Practice: Society, Region, and Identity in Medieval Andhra*, New York: OUP, 2001; and Leslie C Orr. *Donors, Devotees, and Daughters of God*, New York: OUP, 2000. For Buddhism, Neelis' recent book *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks* is extremely comprehensive and exemplary. For the purpose of this dissertation, Neelis' observations concerning networks, capillaries, the transference of goods and ideas, and the utility of epigraphy are particularly apt.

[203] For some attempts to discuss the Buddha image (or lack thereof), see Joe Cribb. "The Origin of the Buddha Image -- the Numismatic Evidence." In *South Asian Archaeology, 1981*. Edited by Bridget Allchin, 231–44, Cambridge, 1984; John C Huntington. "Origin of the Buddha Image, Early Image Traditions and the Concept of Buddhadarśanapunyā." In *Studies in Buddhist Art of South Asia*, edited by A K Narain, 23–58, New Delhi, 1985; Vidya Dehejia. "On Modes of Visual Narration in Early Buddhist Art." *The Art Bulletin* 72, no. 3 (1990): 374–92; Susan L Huntington. "Early Buddhist Art and the Theory of Aniconism." *Art Journal* 49 (1990): 401–8. Two recent publications have added to the corpus of available literature on the subject, see Susan L Huntington. "Shifting the Paradigm." *South Asian Studies* 31, no. 2 (2015): 163–86 and the wonderfully concise Robert DeCaroli. *Image Problems*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015. In Huntington's latest article, she suggests that "'iconic' and 'aniconic' as used in the Buddhist context are a legacy of an outdated intellectual construct. Removing the artificial framework these terms create paves the way to studying the art in its own right," (p. 183). I support this sentiment.

and recurring patterns tended to ignore epigraphy or intertextuality as well. Meanwhile, one collective volume on Sanchi added much to the discussion and expanded the horizons by including investigations on a variety of subjects old and new.[204] *Unseen Presence* covered a vast amount of ground and included material on art,[205] architecture,[206] preservation,[207] and epigraphy.[208]

Early Historic Period Buddhist inscriptions[209] from sites like Sanchi are at the forefront of this burgeoning epigraphic data insurgency underway in Buddhist Studies.[210] In particular, however, Schopen's landmark article, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism," demonstrated how to make an argument about source criticism with epigraphy while simultaneously contributing to a theoretical shift in source/field criticism.[211] Not only has Gregory Schopen utilized donative inscriptions to study early Indian Buddhism, but he has increasingly merged the

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[204] Dehejia, *Unseen Presence*.
[205] Maurizio Taddei. "The First Beginnings: Sculptures on Stupa 2" In *Unseen Presence*, 77–91.
[206] Kevin Trainor. "Constructing a Buddhist Ritual Site." In *Unseen Presence*, 18–35.
[207] Debala Mitra. "Discovery and Restoration of the Monuments." In *Unseen Presence*, 1–17.
[208] Schopen, "What's in a Name," pp. 58–73.
[209] Although one could cite numerous examples, I will reference several of the most valuable studies. See Dehejia, "The Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage": Singh, "Sanchi: the History of the Patronage of an Ancient Buddhist Establishment." Kumkum Roy. "Women and Men Donors at Sanchi: a Study of Inscriptional Evidence." Edited by L K Tripathi. *Position and Status of Women in Ancient India* 1 (1988): 209–23. Ranabir Chakravarti. "Merchants and Other Donors at Ancient Bandhogarh." *South Asian Studies* 11, no. 1 (1995): 33–41. For a creative approach in applying these inscriptions to broader historical phenomenon within the history of Buddhism see, for example, Jonathan Walters. "Stūpa, Story, and Empire." In *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia*, edited by Juliane Schober, 160–94. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997. More recently, see Meera Visvanathan. "Before Genealogy? Marking Descent in the Inscriptions of Early Historic India." *Religions of South Asia* 5, no. 1 (2012): 245–65.
[210] Many of the articles collected in Gregory Schopen's *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997 illustrate the power of putting epigraphy to good use for the sake of exploring the history of Buddhism. For a tantalizing work utilizing Buddhist epigraphy to create an argument about ancient Buddhist practice (and the preservation of materials), see Gregory Schopen. "On Monks, Nuns and 'Vulgar' Practices." *Artibus Asiae* 49 (1988): 153–68, which is also included in *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks*.

use of inscriptions with his extensive knowledge and translations of the Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya.[212] He has also deployed donative epigraphy in studying Mahāyāna Buddhism, as have many of his students who have been revising and expanding his arguments recently.[213] Beyond the study of Buddhism, archaeologists and art historians have also increasingly relied upon these records to contextualize their sites.[214] Needless to say, no longer can most historians easily avoid using epigraphy to supplement the study of Asian history. Further, there is substantial benefit to delving thoroughly into the epigraphic corpus itself for the material is infinitely rich in data but short on analysis.[215]

Exceptional work on epigraphy in South Asia in recent years has come from a variety of scholars with ranging interests. Noteworthy from the field of History is Cynthia Talbot's 2001 book on temple inscriptions and endowments from medieval Andhra Pradesh,[216] Jason Neelis' work on the long-distance transmission of Buddhism from

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[211] Although the article is reprinted in *Bones, Stones and Buddhist Monks*, the original is: "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism." *History of Religions* 31, no. 1 (1991): 1–23.

[212] The various articles contained within Schopen, Gregory's *Buddhist Monks and Business Matters*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004 exemplify this process. In particular, I cite "Doing Business for the Lord." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114, no. 4 (1994): 527–54.

[213] See the many articles contained in Schopen's third volume *Figments and Fragments of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005. Again, in particular, one might cite "Mahāyāna in Indian Inscriptions." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 21, no. 1 (1979): 1–19.

[214] The work of Julia Shaw at Sanchi, Akira Shimada at Amaravati, and Lars Fogelin at Thotlakonda are just a few examples. For Shimada, see *Early Buddhist Architecture in Context*.

[215] Some lesser-known but important studies are: N J Francis. "The Institutional Base of Early Buddhist Art at Amaravati." *Deccan Studies* 3, no. 2 (2005): 47–89; Bimala Churn Law. "Bhikshunis in Indian Inscriptions." *Epigraphia Indica* 25 (1939): 31–34; Aloka Parashar-Sen. "Names, Travelers, and Inscriptions in Early Historic South India." *The Indian Historical Review* 34, no. 1 (2007): 47–90; Himanshu Prabha Ray. "Bharhut and Sanchi -- Nodal Points in a Commercial Interchange." In *Archaeology and History*, edited by B M Pande and B D Chattopadhyaya, 625–27, Delhi, 1987; Kirit K Shah. *The Problem of Identity,* Delhi: OUP, 2001; Janice D Willis. "Female Patronage in Indian Buddhism." In *The Powers of Art*, edited by Barbara Stoler Miller, 46–53, Delhi, 1992.

[216] Cynthia Talbot. *Precolonial Indian in Practice: Society, Region, and Identity in Medieval Andhra*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

South Asia along the Silk routes,[217] and Daud Ali's theoretical reorientation of history as an inscriptional genre generated from a rich analysis of royal eulogies from Chola copper-plate inscriptions.[218]

Sanchi's Epigraphic History

The Sanchi inscriptions were first famously studied by James Prinsep who used the recurring Prakrit word *dānaṁ* written in *brāhmī* to decipher the script. Prinsep's study of *brāhmī* ultimately unlocked the Aśokan inscriptions which in turn ushered in a new era of scholarly inquiry into ancient India.[219] He remarked on the frequently recurring *brāhmī* letters "*da*" and "*nam*": "I was struck at [the inscriptions' terminations] with the same two letters…it immediately occurred that they must record either obituary notices, or more probably the offerings and presents of votaries, as is known to be the present custom in the Buddhist temples…" At the end of his article, he presented the alphabet as he knew it, entirely correct except for the vocalic *ṛ*, which is actually *jha*, and five others which he was unable to locate (*gha*, *ṅa*, *jha*, *ña*, and *o*).[220]

In 1854, General Alfred Cunningham published many of Sanchi inscriptions along with translations of the editions.[221] Bühler published the next edition of four-hundred and fifty six inscriptions in 1892 but it was Lüders' well-known List of Brāhmī Inscriptions

[217] Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks.*
[218] Daud Ali. "Royal Eulogy as World History." In *Querying the Medieval*, edited by Ronald Inden, Jonathan Walters, and Daud Ali, 165–229. Oxford; New York, 2000.
[219] James Prinsep. "Note on the Facsimiles of Inscriptions From Sanchi Near Bhilsa, Taken for the Society by Captain Ed. Smith, Engineers." *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 6 (1837): 451–63 and James Prinsep. "Interpretation of the Most Ancient of the Inscriptions on the Pillar Called the Lát of Feroz Sháh, Near Delhi, and That of the Allahabad, Radhia and Matthia Pillar, or Lát, Inscriptions Which Agree Therewith." *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* 6 (1837): 566–609.
[220] See Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, p. 207 for a more comprehensive discussion.
[221] Cunningham, *The Bhilsa Topes.*

from the *Epigraphia Indica* in 1912 that became the era's standard.[222] John Marshall and his team uncovered more monuments and yet more inscriptions during their excavation and research periods between 1912 and 1919. Their resulting three volumes from 1944 became the premier reports on Sanchi's art, architecture, and epigraphy.[223] However, still today some scholars utilize Lüders' list instead of Marshall, Foucher, and Majumdar's, possibly because the Marshall volumes are not freely available online whereas the *Epigraphia Indica* volumes can be located easily in numerous libraries in person and digital.

Today, the best resource available is Keisho Tsukamoto's *Indo Bukkyō Himei no Kenkyū*[224] from 1996 because it is probably the most comprehensive list of Indian Buddhist epigraphs, although it does omit certain lesser-known sites and new findings. Nevertheless, Tsukamoto explained various Prakritic variances appearing in editions and provided a very useful grammatical analysis of many uncommon words. It is unfortunate that a majority of scholars still refer to Lüders' list of considerably older editions when Tsukamoto's volume is comprehensive, detailed, and explanatory. At the very least, referring to Marshall and Majumdar's list in the Sanchi excavation volumes should be standard procedure since Majumdar's presentation of the inscriptions is unparalleled for the time given his detailed report on the exact location of each inscription, its translation, and any nuances. For Sanchi, at least, Tsukamoto's list is merely an updated version of

[222] In 1919, the Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India published the little-known "Dates of the Votive Inscriptions on the Stupas at Sanchi" by Ramaprasad Chanda. Chanda thoroughly examined the palaeography of the inscriptions and heavily influenced Marshall and Majumdar's later editions and analysis. See Ramaprasad Chanda. *Dates of the Votive Inscriptions on the Stupas at Sanchi*, New Delhi: Indological Book Corp, 1977.
[223] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*.

Majumdar's editions but does not list the many important subtleties found in the Marshall tome.

In constructing my database of the Sanchi inscriptions and in gathering evidence for the arguments made throughout this dissertation, I made extensive use of Tsukamoto's editions, although I did make emendations to his readings of the Sanchi inscriptions when necessary because he only imported the editions from Marshall's volumes edited by Majumdar so long ago. Such changes were made from my own copies and analyses of the inscriptions from Sanchi. However, my corrections mostly changed personal name spellings and other small details. Since the donative inscriptions at Sanchi are relatively simple and repeat in content quite frequently, it is somewhat easy to estimate lost letters due to fragmentation or confusing orthography.

Additionally, because of the nature of my study, I had the advantage of being able to study groups of inscriptions based on their relative chronological age, thus I was able to connect misspelled personal names to properly spelled personal names based on generation.[225] For instance, it is important to note how many times a specific individual donated to the Sanchi *saṁgha* and the easiest way to do this is to ensure that we understand the difference between a donor named Budharakhitā and another donor named Budharakhitā from a different monument altogether. Conversely, Budharakhitā may also be easily confused with the masculine Budharakhita, who would have been a completely different donor. Another example would be the name Sagharakhita, which may be spelled a number of ways: Sagharakhita, Saghārakhita, or even Saṁgharakhita. In many

[224] Tsukamoto, *Indo Bukkyō Himei No Kenkyū.*

instances, these personal names may be linked together because of other information existing in the inscription, such as identified place of residence or named family member. Fortunately, I was able to first preliminarily identify these problematic names in the inscriptions from Tsukamoto and Majumdar's list and then personally inspect the inscription to either verify or slightly emend the edition. More often than I would have liked, I was forced to rely upon Tsukamoto's editions when re-reading and editing certain inscriptions that are very difficult to see due to deterioration since the Marshall years. Tsukamoto nearly exclusively relied upon Marshall's readings of the Sanchi inscriptions, although he provides excellent references to various other known editions, including inscription numbers. In this dissertation, whenever I reference an inscription that may be found in Tsukamoto's volumes, I list the number as "Tsuk. X" while I place Marshall and Majumdar's inscription number in the footnotes (as "MM x"). Other scholars have variously edited and used the Sanchi inscriptions as well but only in piecemeal or in obscurity.[226]

Another lesser-known attempt to provide editions to the inscriptions comes from an Indian university student's M. Phil thesis.[227] Lakshmi Devi Upadrasta provided an

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[225] For an extensive discussion on what I mean by generation, see Chapter 3, Section 3.

[226] In one article, Lars Fogelin links donors to ritual and presentation patterns found at Buddhist archaeological sites. See "Ritual and Presentation in Early Buddhist Religious Architecture." Elsewhere, Julia Shaw has done a remarkable job at contextualizing the Sanchi donative epigraphy with the surrounding archaeological landscape in *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*. Much more recently, P.K. Basant has done a detailed investigation of socio-economic milieu in and around Sanchi during the Early Historic period. In many ways, his book takes up similar themes present in this current dissertation. However, our goals are different and Basant's conclusions are different because his analysis was different. Basant's book could be read as a companion and reference piece since he does an excellent job referencing the inscriptions and discussing their various enigmatic meanings. See *The City and the Country in Early India: a Study of Malwa*, Primus Books, 2012.

[227] Lakshmi Devi Upadrasta. "History and Palaeography of the Sanchi Stupa Epigraphs," Nagarjuna University, India, 1992.

excellent modern look at the inscriptions' palaeography and attempts to link them historically to the development of the *brāhmī* script. She gave new editions to the inscriptions along with translations. However, her list is incomplete and mostly follows the Marshall and Majumdar editions. The value of her thesis mostly lies in her detailed treatment of the *brāhmī* characters themselves—an important but often overlooked part of historical studies.

Traditionally, scholars searching for historical facts about monastic Buddhists, gender in early Buddhism, or references to geographic locations, cite and then forget. Despite the value of the sociological information, it is uncommon to find an in-depth study of these little understood written records by specialists who are able to read beyond their relatively simple Prakrit language in a somewhat straightforward *brāhmī* script as pioneered during the reign of Aśoka Maurya in the third century BCE. I seek to read between the lines and study these records in some new ways, to illustrate not only their utility as historical records that must be repeatedly revisited but also as markers of broader historical processes, such as the expression of donation rituals in a completely new way, namely in writing, and in a totally new medium. Subject to much debate over the past few decades, the use of material culture to study ancient Indian religion has led to the identification of several problems with exclusively relying on religious literature. Gregory Schopen has been at the forefront of this movement away from written sources and towards a more hybrid approach of looking at texts found in an archaeological context to expand corpus of what textual scholars assess. Here I have attempted to adopt a similar research style. Some problems of relying *exclusively* on written textual sources

are: 1.) they are mostly undated; 2.) they may derive from a very late manuscript tradition; 3.) they are heavily edited by monastic elites (in the case of Buddhism); and, lastly, 4.) they intend to inculcate a specific monastic ideal.[228]

The inscriptions are also still not very well understood both in terms of their original context (meaning their relative age and location) nor their preservation (meaning they were taken at face-value as Marshall volumes's were viewed as a historical archive themselves). In short, I intend to improve our scholarly generalized understanding of the inscriptions with a re-arrangement of the epigraphic corpus. In an effort to be as transparent as possible about the dataset, what is displayed in chapter 3 is an arrangement according to 1.) my own re-reading of the individual inscriptions which includes minor corrections to the editions; 2.) separation into the generational groups SG1 and SG2 to highlight change over time (presented in Chapter 3 Section 3); 3.) improved correlations between fragmentary or poorly written inscriptions whereby some donors and donor-features (such as location, gender, affiliation, etc.) are reconstructed, thus clarifying the numbers in sociological categories; and 4.) identifying oddities and one-of inscriptions and either removing them from the calculations altogether (if they are heavily fragmented) or placing them into their proper correlating group based on their relationship to other similar inscriptions with similar information. While it is possible to present such an archive (which should be studied further alongside re-evaluation of my

[228] See "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism," p. 3. Moreover, Norman and others are of the opinion that all of our textual canonical sources, including the Pāli, are translations, at the very least, from an earlier source. See K.R. Norman, "The Value of the Pali Tradition," in *Jagajjyoti Buddha Jayanti Annual* (Calcutta: 1984). Inscriptions, generally, do not have this problem, except for the rare case of royal edicts being copied in multiple places and changed slightly throughout, like the case of several Aśokan edicts.

own conclusions) on paper in the present age, thankfully the internet and advanced database resources allow me to store and freely offer such a *living* archive online where it can be readily improved upon nearly daily and re-displayed without printing hundreds of pages of new appendices. Such a project, however, is worthy of a much more extensive future enterprise comprising of not just the Sanchi inscriptions but all the Early Historic period South Asian Buddhist inscriptions as well.[229]

The Sanchi Corpus

Briefly, below I will summarize the Early Historic Period epigraphic corpus from Sanchi. Table 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 separate the inscriptions into their find-spots. In most previous studies where the Sanchi inscriptional corpus was extensively utilized the inscriptions were deployed without consideration for their find-spot, relative date, or architectural feature. Distinguishing these elements is important when studying the inscriptions so that a historical progression may be established and investigated. Moreover, assuming that the inscriptions may all be taken together is unfair to the individual donors and groups of donors who are all unique. Throughout this dissertation, I have attempted to give agency to as many inscriptions as possible and this begins by carefully understanding what has survived, where it has survived and the relative dates. One sub-theme of my project is to fine-tune Indian Buddhist epigraphic studies and this is one method where we may begin to improve our approach.

[229] I fully intend on publishing my inscriptional database on the internet as soon as I can marshal enough resources to properly program an intuitive interface. At present, I do not have the programing knowledge to personally take on the project. Such a project would take a team of experts much akin to the team that works on www.Gandhari.org or on the Bibliotheca Polyglotta (http://www2.hf.uio.no/polyglotta/). It may be possible to merge my database of inscriptions with one of the other digitized collections, but I have yet to propose such an enterprise.

Feature	Location	Number of Inscriptions	Number Fragmented[230]
Ground vedikā	stūpa 2	65	7
Upper vedikā[231]	stūpa 2	21	4
Upper vedikā	stūpa 1	168	60
All?[232]	stūpa 3	16	4

Table 2.2: Sanchi Donative Inscriptions circa 1st c. BCE (Mid)

Feature	Location	Number of Inscriptions	Number Fragmented
Ground vedikā	stūpa 1	372	51
Pavement slabs	stūpa 2	8	4
Pavement slabs	stūpa 1	58	12

Table 2.3: Sanchi Donative Inscriptions circa 1st c. BCE (Late)

Feature	Location	Number of Inscriptions	Number Fragmented
Toraṇa[233]	stūpa 1	6	0

Table 2.4: Sanchi Donative Inscriptions circa 1st c. CE

The tables are arranged in approximate chronological order according to my dating scheme, which is laid out and discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3. The listing here includes the total number of inscriptions and the number of fragmented inscriptions, which may include only partially fragmented inscriptions or inscriptions which are nearly unusable. Omitted from these lists are later inscriptions from after the 1st century CE and the few earlier donations from structures we cannot precisely date or are fragmented non-extant pieces.[234] The number of these inscriptions is very low. As we can see, by the time *stūpa*

[230] This includes inscriptions that are still usable, such as those that provide fragmented names that can be reconstructed or localities from which the donors come from (like Vedisa, Ujjain, Kurara, etc.).
[231] What MM call the "berm balustrade" is no longer in-situ.
[232] *Stūpa* 3's extant material is very little. Only several *vedikā* pieces remain and its one remaining *toraṇa* does not bear any inscriptions. It is likely that *stūpa* 3's *vedikā* is roughly contemporaneous with *stūpa* 2 and *stūpa* 1's berm/upper *vedikā*.
[233] The dating of the Sanchi *stūpa* 1 *toraṇa* has been subject to some debate and hinges on the dating of King Siri Sātakaṇi, a probably Śuṅgan ruler. I tend to err on the side of caution and therefore I take the *toraṇa* date to be approximately 25 CE, while some have previously argued for a date closer to 25 BCE. Neither date affects the arguments of the dissertation since I rely more on relative dating, see Chapter 3, Section 3.
[234] Also omitted because they are not private donations are the Aśoka's edict, the reliquary inscriptions, and the imprecatory inscriptions from the *toraṇa*-s.

1's ground *vedikā* was constructed the number of donors and total number of inscriptions increases dramatically. Briefly, we may analyze this as a crucial juncture within the history of Sanchi as the *saṁgha* apparently had enough reach to considerably expand on patronage. This will be discussed more throughout Chapter 3. In the next section, I will outline and compare the epigraphy to the architecture upon which it is placed. In my view, there is a correlation between number of donations, number of architectural pieces possible to bear donations, and the feature the pieces augment (such as the *vedikā*).

2.5 ARCHITECTURE AND DONATION AT SANCHI

The gifts to the Sanchi *saṁgha* may have taken any number of forms, such as actual coins, property, animals, etc. However, there is limited art historical or archaeological evidence to explore donation. The one exception that forms a representative sampling of donation to places like Sanchi are the balustrade (*vedikā*) fragments which became inscribed with donor names and social background. As such, it is important to study these individual architectural fragments that construct the actual monuments at Sanchi since they are the surviving physical manifestations of the generosity of the donor network's patrons. I propose that some qualities of the patronage network may therefore be explored statistically by identifying the patterns of donation appearing on these architectural pieces with inscribed donor records. I have conducted such a study in Chapter 3. Here I am describing what remains.

Feature	Location	Original No.	Extant No.	No. of Inscriptions
Cross-bars	stūpa 1	336	?	253[235]
Rail-pillars	stūpa 1	120	106	84
Coping-stones	stūpa 1	60[236]	?	34
Cross-bars	stūpa 2	240	12?[237]	12
Rail-pillars	stūpa 2	88	85	37
Coping-stones	stūpa 2	38	16?[238]	16

Table 2.5: Surviving *Vedikā* Components from *Stūpa*-s 1 and 2

Before 19th century Western investigation, the site was likely pillaged for useful stone. Many other pieces were lost due to time. Whatever the case may be, the remaining inscribed pieces, which are a majority at *stūpa* 1, are a vital source of information. Because a majority of the *vedikā* pieces do remain, it is still possible to formulate useful methods for reading inscriptions because the majority is a reflection of the general pattern. The Archaeological Survey of India beginning with John Marshall replaced the missing pieces, but as one can see in Table 2.5 above, it is unknown how exactly how many pieces were reconstructed or moved to different areas at the site.

[235] Inscriptions from both *vedikā*-s may be on the inside or outside facing side of the piece. On some pieces, like cross-bars, both sides are inscribed, hence one cannot simply take for granted that 253 inscribed cross-bars from *stūpa* 1's *vedikā* means that 253 cross-bars in total were inscribed—some of these are inscribed on both sides, meaning that less than 253 cross-bars are inscribed. The same is true for all the *vedikā* pieces.

[236] The actual number of coping-stones for either of these monuments is difficult to determine since some of them are cracked and likely others restored to match the missing dimensions.

[237] It is unclear based on visual inspection alone just how many of the cross-bars currently on the vedikā are original. However, because there are twelve donative inscriptions, we can say that, at the very least, these twelve are original. It is far more likely though that a majority if not a vast majority are extant, regardless if Marshall and the ASI placed the cross-bars in their correct order or not.

[238] For the coping-stones, Marshall was not forthcoming about which had been restored, if any. Without detailed knowledge of the stone itself it would be difficult to visually inspect the pieces to determine if any are reconstructed. However, on the basis of donative inscriptions alone, sixteen coping-stones from *stūpa* 2 were inscribed. It is possible that the other sixteen were simply not inscribed. Or they are reconstructions. According to the local site managers, all the pieces are "original" even though Marshall was forthcoming about some restored pieces, such as three rail-pillars from *stūpa* 2 (p. 79) and fourteen rail-pillars from *stūpa* 1 (p. 33). Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*.

Rail-pillars are the fundamental pieces available for donation. Two uprights hold together three cross-bars. Coping-stones are at the top of the rail-pillars and cap the *vedikā*. There is a visual hierarchy to the naked eye between these three pieces. Coping-stones may be on top physically and are the largest, heaviest sections, but the standing rail-pillars are the most important functionally. Coping-stones and rail-pillars are complements to each other, as a copings-stone is nearly a rail-pillar turned on its side.

There are at least three ways to intellectually think about the *vedikā* architecture. First, functionally, we may consider each piece as an equal player in holding together the *vedikā* since a coping-stone operates as a cap while a rail-pillar supports the entire *vedikā* form the base. Cross-bars enclose and align the visitor with the circumambulatory path. Next, we could think about the architecture symbolically. The coping-stone represents the grand-scale of the *vedikā* since they are furthest from the ground despite being the heaviest. The rail-pillars represent the strength of the *vedikā* being that they uphold the coping-stones. Meanwhile, the cross-bars of the *vedikā* effectively visually block a person's gaze by diverting the eyes back towards the immense *stūpa*. Similarly, the cross-bars restrict view of the base of the *stūpa* for those who are not walking in the circumambulatory path.

Feature	Location	Height	Width	Depth	Volume
Cross-bars	stūpa 1	28	31	3.5	3,038 in^3
Rail-pillars	stūpa 1	101.5	26	13.5	35,626.5 in^3
Coping-stones	stūpa 1	24	110	24	63,360 in^3
Cross-bars	stūpa 2	18.5	20	7	2,590 in^3
Rail-pillars	stūpa 2	71	16	10	11,360 in^3
Coping-stones	stūpa 2	17	77	14	18,326 in^3

Table 2.6: Size of *Vedikā* Pieces[239]

[239] All measurements are in inches and hand-measured by me. There is slight variation on the sizes of the different pieces so I have calculated a generalized average.

Lastly, we could think of the *vedikā* in simple material terms. Table 2.6 above lists the sizes of the *vedikā* pieces. It could be reasonable to suggest that because of their weight and sheer size the coping-stones were worth more as objects than the other pieces because to place them in position above the rail-pillars would have required a considerable amount of man-power and effort to cut the stone, move it, and, finally, place it. As such, coping-stones were also the fewest. Coping-stones were probably the most expensive to commission for the architectural program for these reasons. Similarly, we might relatively judge the worth of each piece based on number and volume. The volumes of pieces correlates with the number of the pieces: the heaviest pieces are the fewest while the cross-bars, being the lightest by far, were also the most abundant. Although it is conjecture only, the presence of our hundreds of donative inscriptions upon these pieces may have indicated the relative value of each donor's gift. Even if the gifts themselves were not specifically for "a cross-bar" or "a rail-pillar," the donative record inscribed on the pieces may have functioned as some kind of receipt or written “thanks” for the donation.

Gifting in early Buddhism may have increased social (and spiritual) reputation and is supported by the stratification of the available number of gifts. Very few gifts are coping-stone gifts at either *stūpa*. Gifting is particularly apt in a religious community where not only can your reputation increase from donation, but also where some sort of intangible, theological or soteriological merit is simultaneously acquired if we are to

believe Schopen.[240] The gift of a large rail-pillar or coping-stone, monumental architectural pieces, could have served as a substantial enhancer of reputation as donations only, not as markers of the amount donated. In her book on giving in early Buddhism, E. B. Findly suggested that the conjunction of Buddhism and the newly emergent householder category of the era led to "patrons of the [Buddhist] religion prosper[ing] socially in terms of their status and reputation, for *dāna* teachings tell potential donors that the more one gives the greater … their reputations."[241] This system allowed a donor's worth to be based on merit and not on birth. The merit or reputation acquired through a donation at Sanchi might not have depended on rail-pillars or coping-stones. At the very least, donors of any social background may enhance their reputation among all sectors of society by gifting to renunciants who are similarly from all social backgrounds.[242] Later, Findly notes that "…the market-oriented culture, in which Buddhism emerges, reflects a shift away from the valuation of traditional duty and obligation and a greater celebration of individual choice. This shift is based on the increased freedom brought about by social and economic changes, and allows for

[240] Schopen, "What's in a Name."
[241] Findly, *Dāna*, p. 17.
[242] Even though Findly and others are referring largely to lay patronage, Schopen has discussed the problematic nature present at many sites where monastic donors are actually the group reaping many if not most of the 'merit' or reputation from donation. For example, although he is light on references, analysis, and key aspects of individual sites, Schopen argued that "[i]n fact, if we stick to what we can actually know, it would appear that something very like the opposite was the case: we know for certain from inscriptions that from ca. 150 B.C.E.—that is to say, from our earliest knowable donative inscriptions and well before we can have any definite knowledge of the textual tradition—monks and nuns formed a substantial proportion of those involved in donative, merit-making activities connected with the *stūpa* cult and, somewhat later, the cult of images…" in Gregory Schopen. "Two Problems in the History of Indian Buddhism." In *Bones, Stones, and Buddhist Monks*, 23–55. The Layman/Monk Distinction and the Doctrines of Transfer of Merit, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997, pp. 31-32. As I argued below, there are, at least at Sanchi, some categories of donation which are dominated by monastic donors. However, by and large we cannot account for a vast majority of donors across multiple sites and eras,

individual initiative and creativity. It also means, however, in the case of renunciant petitioners, that householders are not obligated by preset affiliation to support them, as they are in Vedic settings."[243] Therefore, the conscious choice to donate to the *saṃgha* at Sanchi seemed to allow for freedom in gift choice, as the donor was not forced to give something specific. There appears to be a wide range of possibilities to choose from, depending on the type of gift one sought to donate, which was at least partially dependent on socio-economic status as well as devotion to this particular religious community. The use of the word *dāna* is nearly unanimously viewed as an early synonym of *deyadhaṃma*, a religious gift,[244] and perhaps both rail-pillars and coping-stones were gifts of some repute.

The coping-stones are also by far the heaviest pieces according to volume (in inches squared) and may have been a great example of gifting power. Their weight is nearly twice that of a rail-pillar and almost six times that of a cross-bar. If the funds for the donation of a coping-stone were not for the symbolic pride of donating the biggest, rarest piece of a religious structure, then the sheer cost of transportation of the massive stone would require significant funds to finance. It seems unlikely that the labor cost was simply absorbed as overhead by the *saṃgha*. Whoever, then, could gift such a rare item undoubtedly received the invisible benefits associated with the ability.

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which is a weakness to Schopen's argument. It is unfortunate but Schopen's argument rests on an anachronistic extraction of donor numbers.

[243] Findly, *Dāna*, p. 38.

Location	Feature	Volume	Largest Donor Group
stūpa 1	Coping-stone	63,360 in^3	Monastic
stūpa 1	Rail-pillars	35,626.5 in^3	Laity
stūpa 1	Cross-bars	3,038 in^3	Laity
stūpa 2	Coping-stone	18,326 in^3	Monastic
stūpa 2	Rail-pillars	11,360 in^3	Monastic
stūpa 2	Cross-bars	2,590 in^3	Monastic

Table 2.7: *Vedikā* Pieces and Donor Groups

Comparing donor groups with what was donated, we may be able to tentatively obtain a sense of intention and order amongst the evidence. For instance, the monastic community is responsible for most of the coping-stone donations. 77% of them were donated by members of the monastic community as found on *stūpa* 1's ground *vedikā*, an overwhelming percentage when comparing to other donor frequencies. It may be justified to say that the monastic community possibly had a pre-determined pursuit to donate coping-stones, whether they were the most soteriologically auspicious pieces, the most expensive pieces, or purely just the largest and most symbolic of giving power given their size and architectural symbolism. The same cannot be said about the rail-pillars, as the laity were the major donor group but at only 50%, not as overwhelming of a majority as the monastic group was for coping-stones. Even though we can see what the monastic community has donated, it is still difficult to determine much else about the monastics themselves since the information derived from the inscriptions is limited. This insight

[244] In the western Deccan cave sites the term *deyadhaṃma* (Pkt: "religious/meritorious gift") is frequently used in similar kinds of Buddhist donative inscriptions.

into what was donated by monastics, though, is one way to squeeze new observations from the restricted dataset.

In the same vein, the inscriptions themselves may provide information about the relative values of the architectural pieces. The following gift from *stūpa* 1 may hint at the price of a single gift on the ground *vedikā*:

Sanchi Inscription 294[245]
(Late 1st century BCE)

1 vejajasa gāmasa dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of the Vejaja village."

If it takes the accumulated funds from one single village, of which there is not another single donation, then the donation of a *vedikā* piece was expensive relative to donations for items we currently do not have records of, such as food, clothing, or items like candles. Alternatively, perhaps the village of Vejaja was relatively poor, or the village itself was disinterested in giving to the Buddhist community and could raise only a few donations. Whatever the case may be, the comparison between this inscription, on a single rail-pillar, to others is worthwhile to consider.

One comparison is to a set of three consecutive donations by the merchant Samika and his son Siripāla. Also from *stūpa* 1, they read:

Sanchi Inscription 186, 187, 188[246]
(Late 1st century BCE)

1 samikasa vānikasa putasa ca sa siripālasa dānaṁ [//]

"A gift [of three cross-bars] by Samika, a merchant, along with his son Siripāla."

[245] This number, as I throughout the dissertation, refers to the corresponding number in Tsukamoto unless specified otherwise. In MM, the number is 308 (henceforth cited as simply MM x).
[246] MM 200-202.

Samika, being a pious and wealthy merchant, probably desired to donate a set sum of funds towards the construction of a *stūpa* balustrade. However, his available funds were perhaps not enough to acquire a rail-pillar (as the accumulated funds of the Vejaja village, was, in contrast). One speculation is that instead of giving just one cross-bar, Samika was determined to gift his entire sum, earning him three cross-bars but not a rail-pillar which could have been out of his "price range." These identically inscribed cross-bars were assembled and placed into position at the same time. Samika probably did not visit the site more than once to donate (or, alternatively, was solicited more than once), but gave a set sum, more than enough for one cross-bar but not quite enough for a rail-pillar. Thus, three cross-bars, all lined up in a row, are in his name.

Another inscription (also from *stūpa* 1) helps establish relative value of the donated architectural pieces:

Sanchi Inscription 161[247]
(Late 1st century BCE)

1 subāhitasa gotiputasa rāja-lipikarasa dāna [/]

"A gift of the royal-scribe Subāhita, a Gotiputa."

Subāhita's inscription is marked on a rail-pillar, the same rail-pillar as the Vejaja village inscription. It is the gift of a royal (*rāja*) scribe, an entirely unique mercantile title. There are no other royal inscriptions on the ground *vedikā*, although several other inscriptions reflect donations of other scribes. Lastly, Subāhita's name is in the same genitive case as Gotiputa, a person known from reliquary inscriptions found in *stūpa* 2. Gotiputa was the teacher of many other prominent monastic teachers in this region and bears the epithet

[247] MM 175.

sapurisa.[248] Gotiputa, as explained elsewhere (Chapter 4), is a metronymic to describe a group potentially linked by mutual maternal ancestry, possibly connoting *brāhmaṇa* status via a *brāhmaṇa* mother.[249] There were likely several individuals bearing this metronymic in and around Sanchi in the 1st century BCE including the charismatic leader whose relics are enshrined. There could be several ways to translate *sapurisa*, but Majumdar has opted for 'saint' to harken at the literal translation of the Sanskrit, *sat-puruṣa* (Pāli *sappurisa*), meaning 'a good man.' I return to this title in Chapter 4, Section 2 and propose that it is not a monastic title but rather a title given to exemplary persons (who are also usually exemplary donors). Majumdar also takes Subāhita, the scribe, as being the son of Gotiputa, but I take it to mean that Subāhita is one of several Gotiputas in a group and not an individual with the personal name Gotiputa. Literally, perhaps the inscription could be translated as "A gift of the royal-scribe Subāhita, who is [born] of a Gotiputa." This rendering would maintain the genitive case while still also keeping the reference to the *sapurisa* Gotiputa. It could be equally possible to translate the compound "Gotiputa" as a genitive *tatpuruṣa*: "son of [a] Goti," which does not not change my argument. Considering Subāhita's status seems to be somewhere between a royal mercantile at the very least and that of a relative of a famous *sapurisa* in the area on the other hand, either way Subāhita was probably one of the most affluent and/or socially

[248] *Dāna,* p. 192. In Findly's discussion of a *sappurisa* (*sapurisa* in the Sanchi Prakrit), the good person "gives a gift respectfully, with his own hand, with consideration, in purity, and with a view to the future." The use of the title at Sanchi seems to fit accordingly with the model described by Findly. The *sapurisa*-s of old, namely those whose relics are enshrined in *stūpa* 2, acted for the benefit and welfare of their whole community, as their titles suggest.

[249] On this subject, see Harry Falk. "The Tidal Waves of Indian History." In *Between the Empires*, edited by Patrick Olivelle, 145–68. Between the Empires and Beyond, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006,

well-connected members of the immediate donor community. Subāhita's considerable status—and the fact that he likely was a *brāhmaṇa* since his famous enshrined relative was a *brāhmaṇa*—supports the idea that rail-pillars, in addition to coping-stones, held more status than cross-bars, thus indicating that the architectural pieces, which were the result of donation, could be telling as to the donor's status.

To conclude, I posit that this architectural data points to an emergent epigraphic habit. Just between the construction of *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* and *stūpa* 1's *vedikā* we see that *stūpa* 2, despite having many potential surfaces for inscribing, actually contained very few inscriptions. Only 5% of cross-bars at *stūpa* 2 were inscribed compared to 75% of the cross-bars at *stūpa* 1. Similarly, 42% of the rail-pillars were inscribed at *stūpa* 2 whereas at *stūpa* 1 70% of them were inscribed. Lastly, 42% of the coping-stones at *stūpa* 1 were inscribed while 57% of coping-stones at *stūpa* 1 were inscribed. As I argue in Chapter 3, there is at least one generation difference in time between the construction of these *vedikā*-s, thus leaving ample amount of time for the organizers in charge of constructing the *vedikā*-s to realize the utility in writing on the monuments and expand its usage. The timeline here also reveals an increased cooperative effort on behalf of the organizers to muster the resources, man-power, and financial sum to erect such a massive monument that is *stūpa* 1's *vedikā*.

These are the fundamental units within the material "text." The inscriptions as a whole are a wealth of vital information that can be approached from many directions. The written text has its own individual units to examine, which I will examine in Chapter 3

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pp. 147-153. The famous Gotiputa who is enshrined is also called a member of the brāhmaṇaical

Section 2. Similarly, the visual text can be split into distinct units as I have done above. Weaving the two texts, the names, relationships, and other information provided in the inscriptions generates a few conclusions of how the *stūpa*'s many parts came together in relation to its patrons.

2.6 SANCHI'S RELEVANCE FOR THE 'MATERIALIST TURN'

One of the primary concerns of this project is to contribute toward the materialist turn in the study of religion. The incorporation of material cultural sources into the study of ancient India—and Asian history broadly as a field—has increased dramatically exponentially over the last few decades. The old criticism famously articulated by Gregory Schopen so long ago that archaeology was the handmaiden of history has largely been evaporated with regard to the study of ancient Buddhism in India over the past two decades.[250] Now, the study of ancient Indian history is becoming interdisciplinary thanks to a wider consideration of sources.[251] For instance, this dissertation heavily relies on epigraphy as the basis to form historical arguments, but I view my analysis and deployment of epigraphy as simultaneously archaeological, sociological, and philological since, in my view, the three can scarcely be separated when asking historical questions as I have done. Moreover, I believe it is difficult to pigeon-hole the study of inscriptions into one category or another since they are technically written texts that can be read and examined in many of the same ways one might read other textual sources. However, the types of questions I ask from the epigraphic data are different from the questions I pose to

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Kauṇḍinya *gotra* as stated in the reliquary inscription from Andher *stūpa* 2.

[250] Gregory Schopen. "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism," p. 7.

readings from the Pāli canon. But can these sources not be read together and their interplay be an important narrative unto itself?

The materialist turn in the study of ancient religion has only recently begun to be unpacked. Manuel Vásquez,[252] Richard King,[253] Patha Mitter,[254] Gregory Schopen,[255] and others have rooted the traditional neglect of material cultural sources in the Protestant Reformation and Enlightenment. As Richard Mann has neatly summarized,

> True religion, from their perspective, was a return to scripture, to the 'word'… Religion, at least in parts of Europle during this time, became an intellectual and personal pursuit based in close readings of primary scriptures and theological debates; the 'stuff' of religious life was viewed by many as a corruption, something to be removed from a 'spiritual' religious life…The spheres of religious belief and the material culture of religion became increasingly viewed as polar opposites. Hence, some of the basic premises of the Enlightenment and Reformation created prejudices against the study of material culture in relation to religion leading into the colonial era… [M]ost academics [did not] have the work of Descartes or Zwingli in mind when they pursue their research. Rather, there has been an intellectual history in the west that has had an often unrecognized and unquestioned impact on the study of religion in relation to material culture.[256]

Even by the 18th and 19th century emergence of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta, material culture continued to be treated as useful if it supported canonical texts.[257] As such, it comes to no surprise that the history of Buddhism came to rely nearly exclusively on Sanskrit and Pāli textual sources. The earliest archaeologists, such as Alfred Cunningham and other officers, only sought to uncover the Sanchi monuments because they wanted to connect their history hobby with the discovery of relics and gold. Oddly enough, it was from these early hobbyists that later generations, such as the generation of John Marshall,

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[251] Thomas R Trautmann, and Carla M Sinopoli. "In the Beginning Was the Word." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 45, no. 4 (2002): 492–523.
[252] Manuel A Vásquez. *More Than Belief*, Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
[253] Richard King. *Orientalism and Religion*, London and New York: Routledge, 1999.
[254] Partha Mitter. *Much Maligned Monsters*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977.
[255] Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism."
[256] Richard D Mann. "Material Culture and the Study of Hinduism and Buddhism." *Religion Compass* 8, no. 8 (2014): 264–73. In particular, see p. 265.
[257] Trautmann and Sinopoli, "In the Beginning Was the Word," pp. 495-6.

Foucher, and Majumdar in the early 20th century, began to see the value in incorporating material remains like sculpture, architecture, and inscriptions with the canonized history found in the texts.[258] For instance, Marshall and Majumdar were elated to have connected the *stūpa* 2 reliquaries with famous teachers found in textual sources. Although their analysis was over-extended, their treatment of the *stūpa* 2 reliquaries was not completely far fetched as Michael D. Willis' article revealed that there likely is some historical connection between the names found on the reliquaries and the famous Buddhist teachers known elsewhere.[259]

Richard Mann[260] recently concluded that the larger field of Religious Studies has long since reconsidered the place of material culture in adding to the discussion of modern and premodern religion, as evidenced in works like Manuel Vásquez's book on theorizing materiality[261] and also the journal called Material Religion. As it pertains to Indian religions, I agree with Mann's assertion that the exploration of the material culture of religions must require the cooperation between anthropologists, sociologists, art historians, philologists, and archaeologists. A multidisplinary approach was also previously advocated by Thomas Trautmann and Carla Sinopoli, who envisioned an academic shift from grand histories to sources indicative of everyday life.[262] With such a shift, historical sources like the Hindu Purāṇas are supplemented or supplanted altogether (depending on the questions being asked) by different sources derived from data on the

[258] For a discussion see, "In the Beginning Was the Word," p. 496. Trautmann and Sinopoli also highlight how many important miscellaneous objects were not preserved (pp. 497-499). The production of archaeological knowledge, however pioneering, was very constrained (p. 500).
[259] Willis, "Buddhist Saints in Ancient Vedisa."
[260] Mann, "Material Culture and the Study of Hinduism and Buddhism," p. 271.
[261] Vásquez, *More Than Belief*.

ground, such as epigraphy or archaeological data.[263] When the source changes, so too does the questions one asks of the source (and vice versa). In recent years, especially in the wake of Gregory Schopen's many influential articles on the history of Buddhism, scholars have begun to uniquely combine different approaches to various kinds of sources given their academic strengths. For Schopen, a trained philologist, studying epigraphy is a natural extension to his encyclopedic knowledge of Sanskrit *vinaya* traditions. Other scholars have utilized other kinds of combinations. For others, historical sources, such as the Greek Periplus, may better complement their questions. Regardless, the spirit of Trautmann and Sinopoli's envisioned shift is present in a number of recent works in Buddhist Studies.

Landscape archaeology with an awareness of epigraphy and canonical sources is a powerful tool. Following in the footsteps of Julia Shaw and the SSP, there have been several other attempts at surveying Buddhist landscapes in South Asia.[264] Although not a *stūpa* site like Sanchi, Lars Fogelin surveyed Thotlakonda in Andhra and drew a number of conclusions. First, he found that some Buddhist monasteries in the 1st century BCE onwards functioned as a economic and retreat centers simultaneously, thus supporting the symbiosis between the saṁgha and laity. Second, he identified funerary cairns outside the monastery walls that may have been deliberately placed on hilltops with clear visibility of

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[262] Trautmann and Sinopoli, “In the Beginning Was the Word,” pp. 510.
[263] Trautmann and Sinopoli, “In the Beginning Was the Word,” p. 496.
[264] See Fogelin, *Archaeology of Early Buddhism*; Hawkes and Shimada, *Buddhist Stupas in South Asia: Recent Archaeological, Art-Historical, and Historical Perspectives*; Hawkes, "Bharhut: A Reassessment."

monastery, thus giving the deceased a permanent "view" of the monastery's *stūpa*-s from the afterlife, rooting his argument in textual sources first introduced by Schopen.[265]

In particular relation to Sanchi, Jason Hawkes has worked on the aforementioned site of Bharhut, a similar type of site to Sanchi which featured a central *stūpa* surrounded by a monumental stone *vedikā* and *toraṇa*. The *vedikā* and *toraṇa* were replete with donative inscriptions similar to those at Sanchi and label inscriptions identifying bas-relief scenes carved on the *vedikā* and *toraṇa*. However, the stone architecture was disassembled and moved to the Indian Museum in Kolkata where it now resides approximately in its entirety. The date of the Bharhut *vedikā* is probably a generation or so earlier than either Sanchi *stūpa* 2 or *stūpa* 1, although I reassess the dating of some of these features in Chapter 3, Section 3. Due to the lack of restoration efforts at Bharhut and the movement of the *vedikā* and *toraṇa* to Kolkata, Bharhut is considerably less-studied than Sanchi (and the original site in Uttar Pradesh is geographically not as accessible as Sanchi, which can be easily visited via Bhopal). As a result of the lack in scholarly interest in Bharhut, the site has not been actively researched for much of the past century. Jason Hawkes, however, has not only re-investigated the site of Bharhut but also its surrounding landscape.[266] One of the most valuable features of Hawkes work is that it decentralizes the *stūpa* and its monumental stone architecture and reconsiders the cultural and religious activity happening around the *stūpa*. One crucial recent paper argued that not all Buddhist landscapes during the Early Historic Period were the same,

[265] Fogelin, *Archaeology of Early Buddhism*.
[266] Jason D Hawkes. "Bharhut"; Hawkes, "The Wider Archaeological Contexts of the Buddhist Stūpa Site of Bharhut." In *Buddhist Stūpas in South Asia*.

meaning that Buddhism was far from a monolithic entity, a conclusion I share.[267] Hawkes also demonstrated that the construction of the Bharhut *vedikā* took place at the same time as increased economic activities in the vicinity. New agricultural villages were built closer to Bharhut than they were the nearest large settlement. Hawkes concluded that, "[p]roximity to Bharhut seems to have been a governing factor in the settlement of permanent agricultural villages during the later centuries BCE."[268]

Another comparably large *stūpa* site replete with epigraphy is Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh. It may have been founded during the Mauryan period but unlike Sanchi there is no Aśokan pillar to confirm the date. The earliest work at the site was done during the 1st century BCE and later enlarged. Akira Shimada's recent book provided a much-needed summary and exploration of the Amaravati material, which includes a great deal of art historical, epigraphic, and architectural evidence.[269] To that effect, also at Amaravati, and Andhra more generally, Catherine Becker considered Buddhist sculpture as informative for not only studying religion but also society and politics at large. In particular, her work on the preservation of Buddhist sites and their use in state-sponsored tourism addressed an ongoing elephant in the room.[270]

Other kinds of archaeo-historical work is being done across the Indian subcontinent as well. For instance, Gethin Rees and Fumitaka Yoneda creatively looked at figurines at Jetavana to study how Buddhist *vihāra*-s possibly functioned as medical care centers for

[267] Jason D Hawkes. "One Size Does Not Fit All." *South Asian Studies* 30, no. 1 (2014): 1–15.
[268] Hawkes, "One Size Does Not Fit All," pp. 12-13.
[269] Shimada, *Early Buddhist Architecture in Context*. One of the strengths of the book is the presentation of the symbiosis between monastic and non-monastic spaces.
[270] Catherine Becker. *Shifting Stones, Shaping the Past*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

pregnant women.[271] Elsewhere, Rees studied the connection between increased urbanization and increased long-distance trade at Western Deccan cave sites with Buddhist *stūpa*-s like Paithan, Junnar, and Sopara during the Sātavāhanas.[272] Robin Coningham's excavations at Lumbini have revealed some fascinating new materials that may shed light on the dating scheme of the Buddha's birthplace. However, the connection between the Buddha and the excavated site is tenuous since the tree-shrine Coningham et. al. found seems to predate Buddhist activity. Nevertheless, if the dates are correct, Coningham may have found some of the earliest evidence of South Asian religion to date.[273] The renewed vigor stemming from these archaeological, art historical, and historical inquiries since 2000 allow important trans-regional conversations pertaining to Early Historic Period sites to begin to take shape. New questions and riddles can begin to be addressed whereas old ones may asked once again using new comparative evidences.

The general trend of landscape archaeologists has been to shift the focus from the Buddhist monuments to the Buddhist archaeological landscapes. For Sanchi, this means looking away from the Sanchi hilltop and its carved remains and towards the surrounding region, connected through various exchange networks represented in the inscriptional corpus. By considering the wider cultural contexts, new questions may be asked to improve the ongoing academic dialogues regarding the ancient Buddhist *saṃgha*. Viewing Buddhist sites broadly removes their restriction as being sole repositories of

[271] Gethin Rees, and Fumitaka Yoneda. "Celibate Monks and Foetus-Stealing Gods." *World Archaeology* 45, no. 2 (2013): 252–71.
[272] Gethin Rees. "Colonial Discourse, Indian Ocean Trade and the Urbanisation of the Western Deccan." *South Asian Studies* 30, no. 1 (2014): 17–34.

monumental architectural, epigraphic, and sculptural evidence. Instead, viewing the wider archaeological contexts expands our understanding of the relationship between Buddhism, the state, and social and economic structures through their mutual involvement in trade, urbanism, and agricultural practices. I aspire to supplement the history and recent approaches toward the study of Sanchi and other hilltop Buddhist sites with my own theoretical interpretation of the concepts of 'religion' and 'network' in order to productively frame the overarching exploration into the early north Indian Buddhist institution and its growth. At the same time, by weaving together epigraphic and Pāli canonical sources in this dissertation, I hope to fulfill the 'materialist turn' by constructing a series of informed hypotheses related to the participants, or historical actors, at play in Sanchi during the Early Historic Period.

Moving Beyond Assumptions

Historiography at Sanchi typifies the problem summarized by Trautmann and Sinopoli. One crucial problematic assumption made by Marshall, Foucher, and Majumdar was that Sanchi was a Theravādin site, which would make the donative inscriptions representative of Theravādin patronage in South Asia.[274] The authors said, "[t]hus the epigraph[y] incidently supplies the information that Sāñchī was in the hands of the Theravādins, and that, by the first century B.C., other rival schools were established in the regions."[275] Although we cannot confirm the exact image the authors had in mind when they said Theravādin, we know that they viewed the "Theravāda" as "the earliest of all the

[273] See Coningham, et. al, "The Earliest Buddhist Shrine."
[274] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*.
[275] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*, p. 198.

schools."[276] However, their assumption was deeply rooted in an over-privileging of textual evidence and a determination to link an idealized vision of Buddhism that they had read about in the Theravādin Pāli canon with what they found on the ground at Sanchi. Needless to say, their assumption was wrong and requires updating to match the evidence and current knowledge of Mainstream Buddhism.[277]

First, we might review Marshall, Majumdar, and Foucher's evidence to see where they went and why. They relied primarily on epigraphic evidence to support their claim and extrapolate from a few assumptions. From *stūpa* 1's four *toraṇa*-s there exist four imprecatory inscriptions[278] cursing the removal of any part of the stone architecture to *āna ācariya-kula*, which Majumdar translates as "a school other than that of the Theravādins."[279] Further, the same inscriptions mention that a perpetrator (who causes any of the stone work to be dismantled or transferred to another school) will be considered the same as someone who violates the "Five Great Sins": *mati-ghāta* ('mother-killing'), *piti-ghāta* ('father-killing'), *arahaṁta-ghāta* ('arhat-killing'), *saṁghabheda* ('schism'), and *rudhirupaya* ('causing bloodshed'). Majumdar points out that the last sin, *rudhirupaya*, corresponds to a known sin from "Pāli texts," even though he is reluctant to go further. To continue Majumdar's work, we learn from the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*'s *Parikuppa-suttaṁ*[280] (and indeed numerous other *sutta*-s from the *Saṁyutta Nikāya*) that the fourth curse, written somewhat awkwardly in our inscription as *rudhir*

[276] Marshall*, The Monuments of Sāñchī*, p. 198.
[277] Here I am referring to the early schools, of which there were probably eighteen that emerged after the first schism. Collett Cox. "Mainstream Buddhist Schools." In *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, edited by Robert Buswell, 2:501–7, New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2003.
[278] Tsuk. 382 / MM 396 and Tsuk. 390 / MM 404 are the two best preserved of the group.
[279] I will discuss these imprecatory inscriptions in much greater detail in Chapter 4 Section 5.

'upāyakāna (='causing bloodshed'), probably refers to causing the bloodshed of a *Tathāgata*, meaning the Buddha.[281] Interestingly, though, our curse includes the specific murdering of not only one's mother and father but also of an Arhat and a *Tathāgata*, meaning enlightened ones. Marshall, Majumdar, and Foucher take this as a large piece of evidence showing that Sanchi was Theravādin and not Mahāyāna, which to them as scholars during their time may have generically meant that Sanchi was "Hīnayāna"[282] and not "Mahāyāna," without fully realizing the nuance of their claims.

The next piece of the puzzle is Aśoka's edict found just outside Sanchi's *stūpa* 1's south *toraṇa*. The well-known inscription is known as Aśoka's schism edict and copies of the inscription have been also found at Sarnath and Kausambi. The heavily fragmented version at Sanchi reads:

Aśoka's Schism Edict at Sanchi
(3rd century BCE)

1 . . .
2 . [y]ā bhe[da] . . [gh]e . Mage kaṭe
3 (bhi)khuna[ṁ] ca bhi[khun]inaṁ c[ā] ti puta-pa
4 -(po)tike caṁ[da]ma-[sū]ri[yi]ke ye saṁghaṁ
5 bhākhati bhikhu vā bhiku[ni] va odātā-
6 ni dus[ān]i sanaṁ(dhāpa)yitu anā-[vā]-
7 sasi vā[sā]petaviy[e] ichā hi me kiṁ-
8 ti saṁghe samage cila-thitīke siyā ti

"… The (split up) Saṁgha, both of monks and of nuns, has been made one united whole. As long as (my) sons and great-grandsons (shall rule) and the moon and the sun (shall shine), the monk or

[280] AN V 129.
[281] Although dating to a later period, a similar set of stock-phrased sins may be found in the *Mānava-Dharmaśāstra* (11.55): 1.) drinking liquor; 2.) stealing; 3.) having sex with an elder's wife; 4.) killing a *brāhmaṇa*; and 5.) associating with anyone who does these things. Other brāhmaṇical law codes, such as Viṣṇu (35.1), Yajñavalkya (3.227), and Gautama (1.20) all recognize five great sins like these.
[282] Throughout the late 19th century and early 20th century it was rather common for scholars to group all non-Mahāyāna schools together into a category some Mahāyānists utilize as pejorative based on the non-Mahāyāna schools' perceived conservatism. Hīnayāna refers to the so-called "lesser vehicle," with reference to the "greater vehicle" of the Mahāyāna. More specifically, though, not even the "Mahāyāna" should be casually grouped together so carelessly since there are many different groupings within that category as well.

> nun who creates a division in the Saṁgha shall be made to put on white robes and to reside out of the (Saṁgha) residence. For what is my desire ? That the Saṁgha as a united (body) may long endure."[283]

Aśoka's edict is a foreshadow to the imprecatory inscriptions found on the gateways about two-hundred or more years later. Marshall, Majumdar, and Foucher thought that was significant. They concluded,

> [i]n the third century B.C., Aśoka had perceived signs of schism at Sārnāth, Kauśāmbi, and Sāñchī, and issued edicts for its suppression. Two centuries later, these dissensions in the Church probably took a more serious turn, so that the Buddhists of Sāñchī, who were evidently Therāvadins, even apprehended dismemberment of their sacred edifices. Later on, as the inscribed Buddha and Bodhisattva images of the Kushān period clearly testify, an alien school had already established itself at Sāñchī.[284]

For the authors, the continuation of Aśoka's tradition in the *toraṇa* imprecations was enough to justify calling Sanchi a Theravādin site.

Other inscriptions, like the hundreds of donative inscriptions dating to the 1st century BCE, probably assisted Majumdar in reaching these conclusions. For instance, some titles given to monk and nun donors seemingly refer to Theravādin concepts. From *stūpa* 2, there are two donative inscriptions:

Sanchi Inscription 749[285]
(Mid 1st century BCE)

1 arahakasa bhichuno bhāṇakasa dānaṁ [//]
"A gift of the monk Arahaka, a bhāṇaka."

Sanchi Inscription 689[286]
(Mid 1st century BCE)

1 budharakhitasa sutātikasa arapānakasa dānaṁ [//]
"A gift of Budharakhita, a Sutātika, from Arapāna."

[283] Edition and translation are from Majumdar's section in *The Monuments of Sāñchī*, p. 287.
[284] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*, p. 298.
[285] MM 691. Arahaka may have also been the donor in inscription Tsuk. 755 / MM 697.
[286] MM 631.

The two titles here, *bhāṇaka*,[287] and *sutātika*, might translate to 'reciter' and 'he who is versed in the *Sutta*.'" *Bhāṇaka*-s are known in Pāli literature as being reciters or repeaters of scripture.[288] The term is used throughout the canon but is not exclusively a Theravādin title. However, the term *sutātika* is considerably more obscure. Following Tsukamoto, we may tentatively interpret it as *suttaṁtika* or *sūtrāntika*/*sautrāntika*.[289] Nevertheless, Majumdar translates it quite literally as "he who is versed in the *suttanta*-s," ignoring the potential meaning of "Budharakhita, who is a *Sautrāntika*" and thus *not* a Theravādin.[290]

From *stūpa* 1, there are other inscriptions that potentially reinforced Marshall, Majumdar, and Foucher's conclusion. One might cite many, but the following are representative:

Sanchi Inscription 228[291]
(Late 1st century BCE)

1 devagirino paca-nekayikasa
2 bhichuno sa-atevasikasa .. ṇo [/]

"A gift of the monk Devagiri, who knows the Five Nikāya-s, accompanied by his students."

Sanchi Inscription 290[292]
(Late 1st c. BCE)

1 avisināye sutātikini[yā]
2 maḍalāchikaṭi[k]āya dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Avisinā, a Sutātikinī, from Maḍalāchikaṭa"

[287] Sodo Mori. "The Bhānakas in the Pāli Aṭṭhakathās." *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 1 (1971): 352–56.
[288] See Deegalle Mahinda. *Popularizing Buddhism*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006 for a comprehensive discussion of *bhāṇaka*-s.
[289] Tsukamoto, p. 847.
[290] Although he is not explicit, it is possible, if not likely, that Majumdar was deliberately keeping the term generic as to not refer to any single school. However, given the context of the other arguments made by the authors, it is easy to be mislead by the generic terminology.
[291] MM 242.
[292] MM 304. Also, for the same donor, see Tsuk. 291 / MM 305.

Devagiri's title is not known in Pāli literature, although the words are not difficult, being the Prakrit form of *paṁca-nikāya+ika*. "Devagiri who knows the Five Nikāyas" is a monastic term here confirmed by the additional phrase *sa-atevasikasa*, 'with [his] student.' It may have been easy enough for the authors to connect the reference to five Nikāyas with the Pāli Canon's Dīgha Nikāya, Majjhima Nikāya, Saṁyutta Nikāya, Aṅguttara Nikāya, and Khuddaka Nikāya, totaling five. Avisinā's title is, again, probably a generic descriptor for "one who knows the *sutta*-s," but Theravādins are not the only group who could have used the term *nikāya* to refer to a collection of texts.

Given the epigraphic evidence, it is difficult to fault Marshall, Majumdar, and Foucher for thinking Sanchi was a Theravādin site. Upon closer inspection, there are problems with their conclusion. First, the *toraṇa* imprecatory inscription dates to the 1st century CE, which is at least one or more generations after the rest of the epigraphic evidence. Although it does demonstrate a continuity between Aśoka and Sanchi, Kausambi, and Sarnath, Aśoka made no reference to Theravādins or any other school. Next, each of the titles found in the inscriptions which seemingly point to Theravādin literature might be red herrings. Marshall, Majumdar and Foucher knew about other Buddhist schools but were under the faulty assumption that all schools originated with the Theravādins since they were also "the oldest." As such, the authors did not consider that Sanchi might be an amalgamation of Mainstream Buddhist schools since there were

no monasteries found during Marshall's Phase 1 (Aśoka's time) or Phase 2 (The Śuṅgan period).[293]

Looking at the monastic titles found in the inscriptions cited above, each save for one may be explained. The *bhāṇaka* tradition was not distinctly Theravādin.[294] The titles of Budharakhita and Avisinā could have referred to separate schools altogether, the Sautrāntikas, a branch of the Sarvāstivādins, but probably their titles were generic referring only broadly to the knowledge of knowing texts. Only Devagiri "who knows the Five Nikāya-s" might be a Theravādin, but even then Nikāya is not a school specific term.[295]

The last red flag that Marshall, Majumdar, and Foucher did not consider comes from the reliquary inscriptions of the eight monastic teachers enshrined in *stūpa* 2. In *stūpa* 2 were a number of reliquaries fortunately incised with inscriptions that described who was enshrined. One remarkable reliquary inscription reads:

Sanchi Stūpa 2 Dhātupātra 6
(Late 2nd century BCE?)

(Lid exterior)
Sapurisa kāsapagotasa savahemavatācariyasa

(Lid interior)
Sapurisa majhimasa

(Bottom)

[293] Shaw has convincingly argued that monks were perhaps still living either in "make-shift" structures that no longer survived or in adapted rock-shelters. During her survey of the Sanchi vicinity, she found a number of such rock-shelters on the western and southern edges of the hill. Some had some kind of platform constructed along with smaller votive *stūpa*-s nearby. Unfortunately, these rock-shelter spaces have not yet been excavated to my knowledge. More have been found according to the local ASI managers. In Shaw's book, see *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*, pp. 90-91. For a discussion of the platformed monastery form, see Shaw, "The Sacred Landscape."
[294] Deehalle*, Popularizing Buddhism*, pp. 5-6.
[295] Jens-Uwe Hartmann. "Āgama/Nikāya." In *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, edited by Robert Buswell, 1:10–12, New York: Macmillan Reference USA, 2003.

Sapurisasa hāritīputasa

"[Relics] of the worthy Kāsapagota, teacher of all the Hemavatas."

"[Relics] of the worthy Majhima."

"[Relics] of the worthy Hāritīputa."

Fascinatingly, the term 'sava-hemavata' probably refers to the Mainstream Buddhist school called the Hemavatas. Textual accounts state that after the Third Council a number of monks were sent on a mission to the Himalayas. The knowledge of the Hemavata mission comes from the *Dipavaṁsa*, which is a history of ancient Sri Lanka probably composed in the 4th century CE[296], although many of the depicted events are derived from at least two earlier texts (composed in Sri Lanka and India). The list of monks enshrined in *stūpa* 2 more or less aligns with the list of Hemavata teachers in the *Dīpavaṁsa*.[297] That the enshrinement of these particular monks is not a random coincidence is confirmed by reliquaries found at *stūpa*-s at Sanchi's smaller, satellite sites. For instance, at Sonari, which is nearby, a reliquary reads:

Sonari Stūpa 2 Sphaṭikapātra
(1st century BCE)[298]

(Side one)
1 sapurisasa goti
2 puga(ta)sa[299] hemavata

(Side two)
3 Sa dudubhisa
4 radāyādasa

"[Relics] of a Gotiputa, who is a *sapurisa*, and spiritual heir of Dudubhisara, the Hemavata."

[296] Oskar von Hinüber. *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, New York; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996, pp. 88-89.
[297] See Willis, "Buddhist Saints in Ancient Vedisa," p. 223 and Table 1 which lists the teachers.
[298] The edition is from Willis, *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India,* p. 88.
[299] Willis ascribes the strange form 'gotipuga' to a scribal error.

Gotiputa, whom I will investigate considerably later in this dissertation (Chapter 4), is not one of the listed Hemavata teachers in the *Dīpavaṁsa*. However, here he is directly called the *dāyāda* ('spiritual heir') to Dudubhisara, who *is* known in the text. In another inscription, the same Gotiputa is called a Koḍiñagota, meaning that he was able to trace his ancestry through a brāhmaṇical *gotra*. Thus, we may conclude that the Hemavata school was somehow intimately connected to the Sanchi region, if not even the primary school in existence since their famous teachers were enshrined in multiple *stūpa*-s for worship.

These problems are oddly reminiscent of a recent argument by archaeologist Jason D. Hawkes that "one size does not fit all" when it comes to Buddhist monastic sites throughout the Indian subcontinent.[300] He argues that Buddhism was not a "monolithic" entity and that many sites throughout the subcontinent display seemingly contradictory features exactly because they were inhabited by Buddhists who had different ideas of how to live, practice, and even build. Hawkes' concept resonates well at Sanchi, as it does at Bharhut where he conducted his fieldwork. Even though Marshall, Majumdar, and Foucher produced an exhaustive three-volume set on the remains at Sanchi during their time, some of their observations must be reconsidered. It is not likely that the "Theravāda"[301] was at Sanchi.[302] Other schools were probably moving along the trade

[300] Hawkes, "One Size Does Not Fit All."
[301] By Theravāda, the authors probably generically meant Hīnayāna but it is not clear if they perceived any differences between the meanings of the two terms.
[302] Peter Skilling has recently studied the distinctive absence of the term Theravāda in many old sources. Theravāda is probably best considered a modern construction. See *How Theravāda Was Theravāda?* Edited by Peter Skilling, Jason Carbine, Claudio Cicuzza, and Santi Pakdeekham, Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2012.

routes and passed through the Sanchi vicinity because of its *stūpa*-s and well-funded *saṁgha*.

This brief example reveals the power of labels and the pitfalls resulting from not thoroughly understanding the sources. We cannot fault the authors for utilizing the best available evidence to them at the time, but we may learn from their theoretical approach which sought to neatly fit Sanchi in with their idealized vision of Buddhism. By turning to the material culture, we can take their valuable contributions and over-turn their assumptions by shifting the conversation from "where does Sanchi fit in with the Pāli canon?" to "What does Sanchi's material culture tell us about the lived religious tradition in central India during the Early Historic Period?"

CHAPTER 3

DONATIVE EPIGRAPHY AT SANCHI

3.1 OVERVIEW

In the previous chapter, I introduced Sanchi and its place within the history of South Asian Buddhism. Now, I would like to explore the vast corpus of donative epigraphy at Sanchi in detail. Writing, here studied as inscribing on stone, functions as a tool to expand and govern the increasing complexity by organizing the institution. Unfortunately, neither administrative documents nor religious manuscript sources have survived from the earliest centuries of the Early Historic Period. In their place are these inscriptional records which are in abundance at Sanchi. Because of Sanchi's enormous number of inscriptions and the wealth of information that may be derived from reading them, I believe they can be effectively analyzed together (and also individually) to identify some patterns and changes within the Buddhist *saṁgha* in the area.

Donative epigraphy acts as a powerful historical lens through which we can view the distant past to consider some aspects of Buddhist practice at places like Sanchi that housed relics of not only the Buddha but disciples and disciples of disciples. In the current chapter, I present my findings into the Sanchi epigraphic corpus. All arguments made here are rooted in the inscriptional dataset directly.

I began my research into the Sanchi inscriptions by asking the question, “What can they tell us about elites and non-elites in early Buddhism?” with the hope to understand the “lived” religion during the Early Historic Period. I believe this question sheds light on the relationship between elite monks who obviously had funds to donate and the rest of

the Buddhist *saṁgha*. However, many other questions quickly arose, such as "How does architecture work in relation to the donation?" and "Who else may have played a role in forming this patronage network?" Still yet further, after numerous research trips and discussions with many scholars of different fields, I inquired, "What is the timeline for this network?" "How efficient is the network?" and "How does the network change with time?" Last but not least, I wanted to consider "What does the presence of this network mean for the development of Buddhism historically?" I provisionally summarize my arguments in this chapter into five points. First, I believe donative epigraphy may be grouped into distinct units which can be analyzed together or separately. Similarly, there is a connection between the donated object and the donative inscription. I view epigraphy at places like Sanchi as a kind of colophon to the material cultural text that includes bas-relief art, architecture, and the site-plan. The inscriptions, in addition to providing actual content to be read and digested by scholars, actually emend or add to the existing text, which varies from art to architecture. The inscriptions added new layers to the text while providing some kind of explanation to what the viewer perceives.

Second, the present timeline and relative dating strategy for the Sanchi inscriptional corpus requires revision. In revising the timeline, I will identify two distinct donor generations present at Sanchi, into which all or most of the inscriptions can be placed.

Third, the standard donative formula of Buddhist epigraphy changed over time and possibly reflects changes in religious and/or administrative perspectives. Many donors to the Buddhist cause probably believed they were receiving religious merit in exchange for their money and thus ought to have their name inscribed somewhere on or near a *stūpa*,

cave, or monastery. However, religious piety may not have been the fundamental guiding principle behind the presentation of all donative records.

Four, the demographics of the donors may be traced over time and reflects some qualities of the patronage network itself. Donative epigraphy has been previously employed extensively as marking "everyday life" at early Indian Buddhist sites. Indeed, the data provided in a large corpus of written records such as these is invaluable, especially because it gives voice to a great number of donors whose history is unknown, lost, or unresolved due to lack of information. This kind of data can yield many clues as to who these common donors were and how they were linked to both Sanchi and the *saṁgha*. They may have been sought out only for their generosity; regardless, they display who might have been interested in the Buddhist religious message and from whom the Buddhist *saṁgha* was interested in collecting alms.

Lastly, the patronage network may be tested using some basic metrics and variables to determine its effectiveness over time. Donative inscriptions are not just markers of a *developing* religious practice and belief system. They also illuminate shifting aspects of patronage, which is not a static, unchanging phenomenon. Patronage changed, sometimes drastically, over time, with regard to almost all aspects of the inscriptions themselves. Types of donors changed, the formula of the inscription changed, and the wording used to describe the donation also changed. The observation here connects the ever-changing inscription with the ever-changing institution which provided the canvas for its carving.

3.2 DEFINITIONS, METRICS, AND DESCRIPTIONS

In my view, the large number of inscriptions from Sanchi may be analyzed from two perspectives. First, they could be presented and analyzed individually. In such a micro-analysis, words, grammar, and material context (meaning their placement and location at the site) can be carefully unpacked for study. A second macro-analytical perspective relies not on individual (or small groups of) inscriptions but rather on reading large numbers of them together to yield a quantifiable dataset from which information can be interpreted. Later in this chapter (beginning with Section 3.5), I heavily rely upon some basic statistics derived from the epigraphic corpus to argue a variety of points, like for the efficiency of the patronage network at Sanchi, which were highlighted above in Section 3.1. To best understand the inscriptions as a large quantifiable dataset I rely upon a kind of abductive reasoning long-employed by archaeologists to interpret collected data. Called "inference to the best explanation," the most likely explanation of a given body of evidence is the one that fits the greatest amount of gathered evidence.[303] Put simply, the best explanations usually have seven traits: 1.) they are empirically broad; 2.) general; 3.) modest; 4.) conservative; 5.) simple; 6.) testable[304]; and 7.) address many perspectives. Given the limits of statistical induction, a few of which might be that the introduction of new evidence often alters an explanation or that multiple lines of evidence often do not

[303] Lars Fogelin. "Inference to the Best Explanation." *American Antiquity* 72, no. 4 (2007): 603–25. Particularly, see p. 611: "… [an] explanation that accounted for the greatest diversity of evidence was more likely to be true."

[304] According to Fogelin, "Inference to the Best Explanation," everyday examples of inferences to the best explanation might be mechanics diagnosing problems with a car and detectives using links in diverse evidence to apprehend criminals (p. 609).

work in concert with one another,[305] "inference to the best explanation places epistemological value on multiple lines of evidence and can accommodate explanations of unique phenomena."[306] Therefore, I strive to interpret the large body of epigraphical data using clear methods that are testable and potentially open to reinterpretation in the future either through the introduction of new data or by way of a different, original analytical method. I aim to utilize both micro-analyses (Section 3.4) as well as macro-analyses (Section 3.5 and 3.6) in this chapter and attempt to extend "inference to the best explanation" reasoning to both in order to produce quality conclusions.

Additionally, in this chapter, I use several terms to describe the donative epigraphy. These terms are used freely throughout and appear in all tables. First, when I refer to a "donation" I mean a singular donation made by one individual (or group of individuals). "Donors" refer to individual gift-givers who occasionally appear in multiple inscriptions. Since I divide the Sanchi donative inscriptions in two generations of donors (see 3.3 below), in a given era a donor may gift more than one time or more than one architectural piece. Instead of tabulating two donations as two separate gifts, I count it as two donations with a single unique donor. Whenever a unique donor gifts more than once he or she becomes a repeat donor, which is a separate category from donor. Many donors are identified in the inscription with their home village, town, or city.[307] I call these

[305] Fogelin, "Inference to the Best Explanation," p. 609.
[306] Fogelin, "Inference to the Best Explanation," p. 609.
[307] Although some of these localities have been identified using historical evidence while others maintain the same name until the present day, the discussion of their exact location and distance from Sanchi is not part of my dataset in this dissertation. These lengthy discussions and arguments are left for a future study using the same data. One short attempt has been made recently to identify the locality known as Kurara in the inscriptions: A K. Singh. "Donors of Korara." In *Discovering Vidisha*, edited by Y Sharma and O P

donors non-local. These non-local places are called nodes in my data because they are nodal points within the networked patronage system. The entire patronage system during the two generations I identified is called the network[308] because the separate nodes interlink and intersect at a central point, a hub, which is Sanchi in this model. Within the larger framework of South Asia (and even Central Asia) there is a multiplicity of hubs to be studied in the future. Sanchi has the most data (and most friendly data for research) because of its size and preservation.

To calculate and analyze the accumulated data, I utilize several simple rates and statistics. The most basic rate is the donation rate, which I define as donations per donor. A simple statistic might be a total, such as the total of non-local donations during a given generation. In my tables, I compare and contrast the two generations using a column called "Analysis," which states the percentage increase or decrease of the metric from Generation 1 to Generation 2. As explained below, the increase in total number of donations from Generation 1 to Generation 2 is nearly 50%, which means that increases or decreases in various metrics are measured against that number. An increase of monastic donations from Generation 1 to Generation 2 of 75% is quite significant, since if all conditions remained theoretically equal and the metrics all increased by 50% just like the total number of donations we might expect the number of monastic donations to also increase just 50%. However, if they increased more, at, say, 75%, then it is a

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Misra, 73–76, New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 2010. For now, I treat each node equally and base the nodes' importance on the total number of gifts that node provides during any given era.

[308] The network also contained capillaries, like roads, and smaller hubs. However, because there are scarcely few donative inscriptions dating to the same time period in the same region, it is difficult to trace precisely when and where the network came and went. For example, at Ujjain, a major urban center, there

substantial, surprising increase. 50% is more or less the control measure to judge change-over-time and forms the basis in which we may begin to make statistical arguments.

A donative inscription may be broken down into individual elements. Each element, or anatomical part, contains important data which can be compared, contrasted, and listed in a database with other similar data. The records are relatively short and contain varying amounts of demographics pertaining to persons who gifted towards the construction or enlargement of the reliquary site.[309] A few basic inscriptions from Sanchi read:

Sanchi Inscription 275[310]
(1st century BCE)
1[311] isirakhitasa dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of Isirakhita."[312]

Sanchi Inscription 281[313]
1 dhamarakhitāya madhuvanikāye dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of Dhamarakhitā, [a woman] from Madhuvana."

Sanchi Inscription 288[314]
1 pusasa cahaṭiyasa bhuchuno dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of the monk Pusa [from] Cahaṭa."

Donative inscriptions record gifts made to the Buddhist community at Sanchi. At least 52 inscriptions show that a donor gifted more than once. However, because of the Sanchi

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is little Buddhist material culture but we know from the Sanchi inscriptions that there were many Buddhists or Buddhist sympathizers living in and around Ujjain.

[309] Other Early Historic period sites, such as Bharhut in Uttar Pradesh, Pauni in Maharashtra, Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh and Bodh Gaya in Bihar also display many of the same epigraphic features.

[310] MM 289.

[311] In the edition of the inscriptions, I put the line number at the beginning to indicate the order in which the words appear on the architectural piece. Some donative inscriptions appear haphazardly over two "lines" for no real reason. This may or may not be significant. I do not believe it is, but for readers and for future investigators this could be relevant.

[312] All translations are my own unless specified otherwise.

[313] MM 295.

[314] MM 302.

inscription's corroded or irregular written script, or unsystematic spelling standards, it is often difficult to determine finite numbers. The total number of donors may be estimated, but not accurately assessed. In the above inscriptions we have three different donors belonging to three different subsets of society. The first is Isirakhita but since his record does not indicate any other information such as profession or locality he is one of many nearly anonymous donors which make up the majority of the donations. The next donor listed above is Dhamarakhitā. Her record provides us with two pieces of information. One is that we may identify her gender as a woman because of the feminine grammatical case of the noun. Also, she provides us with her home village, here called Madhuvana. Therefore, using these two pieces of demographic information, we can associate her with other donors who possessed similar features. The last donor referenced above is Pusa. Pusa is identified as a monk who comes from a village called Cahaṭa. Like Dhamarakhitā, we can consider his donation alongside other monastics, particular other monastics who are from Cahaṭa. Every inscription at Sanchi may be read and evaluated like these three donative records. This chapter reflects many of my findings result from basic associations between donors to complex relationships.

The phenomenon of the donative record does not just occur at Sanchi but also at many other Buddhist sites from roughly the same contemporary Early Historic Period.[315] The inscriptions studied here are in the Aśokan *brāhmī* script and typical northern Indian epigraphical Prakrit language. Although several of these inscriptions are unreadable due

[315] Although by no means an exhaustive list, the most famous open-air *stūpa* sites comparable to Sanchi are Bharhut, Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda, Mathura, and Bodh Gaya. See Lüders, "A List of Brāhmī Inscriptions" for a neatly outlined early attempt to group some of these donative inscriptions. Donative

to wear, most have some data to contribute to this study and are tabulated in various ways below.

I begin to study the inscriptions by placing them into several distinct groups based on information provided. The most basic group is simple. Inscriptions in this group state only the donor's name. Other inscriptions may indicate more, such as the donor's place of residency. Two of the above inscriptions are gifts of non-monastic Buddhists. The other is a gift of a monastic Buddhist, who identifies himself or herself as such with the word *bhichu* or *bhichuni*, which is an epigraphic Prakrit variant of the word known in Sanskrit as *bhikṣu*, 'monk,' or *bhikṣuṇī*, 'nun.' Some other inscriptions indicate the donor's precise relationship to the Buddhist community, such as that of an official member of the laity (*upāsaka*-s or *upāsikā*-s). Still yet others self-identify with their professions, such as being a merchant or weaver. Others indicate a familial relationship or a monastic lineage. Accordingly, donor communities are identified based on the information the donor contributes.

There are several limitations of the data. Not only are there problems in reading the inscriptions due to handwriting irregularities, but the stone has worn down considerably in over two thousand years of weathering. In some cases, the inscribers were simply inaccurate. For example, the following two inscriptions exemplify a common problem throughout the corpus:

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inscriptions can be found in significantly lesser volumes at eastern Deccan cave sites such as Karle, Bedsa,

Sanchi Inscription 166[316]
(1st century BCE)

1 dhamarakhitasa kācupathasa bhichuno dāna [/]

"A gift of Dhamarakhita, a monk from Kācupatha."

Sanchi Inscription 167[317]
(1st century BCE)

1 dhamarakhitāye bhichuniye kācupathasa
2 dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Dhamarakhitā, a nun from Kācupatha."

The first inscription records the gift of a cross-bar by the monk Dhamarakhita from the town of Kācupatha, while the second inscription, the very next one, records the gift of a cross-bar by the nun Dhamarakhitā, also from Kacupatha. In my database of inscriptions, I have recorded these two as different persons, giving two different gifts because even though their name is the same, their names (the nouns) are declined in opposite gendered cases. However, theoretically it is possible that the engraver simply made a mistake and added the long ā to the second inscription, or that he simply left out the long ā in the first. In either case, if there was a mistake—and I do not think there was[318] because the second nouns in each (*bichuno* and *bhichuniye*) are similarly declined with the correlated gender—these two donors would be one donor, who I would label a repeat donor, separated in my archive because of a written mistake by the engraver.[319]

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etc.
[316] MM 180.
[317] MM 181.
[318] Because of frequent fragmentation, a researcher may become impatient with reading an inscription through to the very end without revisiting a nouns termination, thus creating circumstances where the conflation of vowels, which are themselves treated rather irregularly, can change the meaning of the inscription (for instance, from a masculine donor to a feminine donor).
[319] Long vowel *mātra*-s were often forgotten. Generally, earlier *brāhmī* used very few long-vowel *mātra*-s while later *brāhmī* got it "correct" more frequently. Sometimes these are variant words while other times it seems to just be a simple mistake by the engraver. For example, at Sanchi, there are two donative

I have carefully annotated my database because Marshall and Majumdar's list contains a lack of conformity and thus a lack of surety. For instance, consider the following four inscriptions:

Sanchi Inscription 339[320]
(1st century BCE)

1 vedasa+ datasa kalavāḍasa dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of Data-Kalavāḍa from Vedisa."

Sanchi Inscription 340[321]
(1st century BCE)

1 vedisa datasa kalaviḍasa dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of Data-Kalavāḍa from Vedisa."

Sanchi Inscription 341[322]
(1st century BCE)

1 [ve]dasa+ datasa kalavaḍasa dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of Data-Kalavāḍa from Vedisa."

Sanchi Inscription 93[323]
(1st century BCE)

1 datakalavaḍasa dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Data-Kalavaḍa."

Three inscriptions read "gift of Data Kalavāḍa from Vedisa," albeit with slight differences in spelling. "Vedisa" is spelled both as "Vedisa" and also as "Vedasa." Similarly, the name of the donor is written differently in each of the inscriptions. In the first and third,

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inscriptions written on consecutive berm *vedikā* fragments. Inscription Tsuk. no. 546 records the donor as 1 *kurariya kaṇ[ā]ya bhicuniya* … while the next inscription, Tsuk. no. 547, records the donor as 1 *kurarāye kāṇāya bhichuniya* … Clearly, the two inscriptions refer to the same nun but each inscription is written differently.

[320] MM 353.
[321] MM 354.
[322] MM 355.

his name is Data-Kalavāḍa but in the second it is written as Data-Kalaviḍa. We can tentatively infer that all three refer to the same donor with the same name from the same place. Additionally, the three inscriptions are placed on consecutive cross-bars on *stūpa* 1's *vedikā*. However, the fourth inscription in the set omits the location (Vedisa) but writes the standardized name. This inscription also comes from a cross-bar from *stūpa* 1's *vedikā* but at a very different spot. All four donative inscriptions are seemingly referring to the same person but contain obvious differences. Although it is possible that there are two different donors within these four inscriptions, it is more likely that all four of these inscriptions refer to the same person, and that person is from the town of Vedisa. Therefore, on my database, I attribute all four of these inscriptions to the same donor (and he is labeled as a repeat donor) regardless of the minor inscriptional differences. In this way, I have included only a single donor named "Data Kalavāḍa" in my calculations but with four donations total.

The above two examples of Dhamarakhita/Dhamarakhitā from Kācupatha and Data-Kalavāḍa/Data-Kalaviḍa from Vedisa are representative of the problems inherent in studying the Sanchi inscriptions together. With some patience, careful examination, and digital assistance from spreadsheets/databases, it is possible to preliminarily reconstruct and analyze the roster of donors.

[323] MM 107.

3.3 DATING SANCHI'S INSCRIPTIONS

The key to determining the dates of Sanchi's monuments and donative epigraphy rests on three factors: 1.) the Aśokan pillar (and accompanying inscription); 2.) the art and reliquary inscriptions from *stūpa* 2, which is located partially down the old path from the hilltop; 3.) the art and accompanying inscriptions from *stūpa* 1's monumental gateways; and 4.) the layers of additions to the core of *stūpa* 1. In each of these cases, scholars have only been able to assign tentative dates based on similarities and differences to other known monuments and inscriptions. It is clear that the Aśokan pillar creates a *terminus post quem*[324] for the Buddhist activity at the site and that the brick core of *stūpa* 1 dates to this period or sometime shortly thereafter.[325] Later Kuṣāṇa and Gupta period inscriptions, which use a more ornate version of the *brāhmī* script, create a somewhat soft *terminus ad quem* for the Early Historic period. Everything in between may only be relatively dated, which for epigraphy is always difficult during the early Aśokan *brāhmī* period because most of the script looks the same until after the turn into the Common Era.[326]

Over time, there have been numerous attempts to date the Sanchi donative inscriptions, but generally, Majumdar's work at the end of Marshall's *The Monuments of Sanchi* volume 1 is the standard.[327] Table 3.1 outlines the groups and approximate dates, in linear order, of the different inscriptions found at Sanchi. For comparison's sake, I

[324] While there could have been religious activity on the hilltop prior to Aśoka—and there probably was given the area's affinity for Nāga cults—the earliest buildings, such as the core of *stūpa* 1, were constructed using prototypical Aśokan bricks.
[325] The brick core of *stūpa* 1 shares the same stratigraphic level as the foundations of the Aśokan pillar. The bricks of the core were also the prototypical Mauryan-sized bricks (16x10x3 in.). See Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India,* p. 87 for a detailed and updated account.
[326] This discussion is taken up in the section below.
[327] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*. Vol. 1, pp. 301-396.

included R. Chanda's[328] slightly earlier analysis. Chanda published his findings in the *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India* in 1919, while Majumdar's edition is from 1927. Majumdar relies heavily upon Chanda's considerations. The most modern edition of the inscriptions found in Tsukamoto[329] more or less agrees on the dating scheme provided by Majumdar.

Inscriptions	**Marshall and Majumdar's groups**	**Chanda's dates[330]**
Aśokan Edicts	1; 250 BCE	1; 250 BCE
***Stūpa* 1 balust.[331]**	2a; 175-125 BCE	4a; 175 BCE
***Stūpa* 3 reliquary**	2a; 175-125 BCE	--
***Stūpa* 2 balust. / reliquaries**	2b; 125-100 (?) BCE	4b; 150 BCE
***Stūpa* 1 misc. fragments**	2a-c; 125-70 (?) BCE	--
***Stūpa*-s 1/3 gateways**	3; 100 BCE – 15 CE[332]	7; 75 BCE – 25 BCE
***Stūpa* 3 balust.**	3; 100 BCE – 50 BCE	--
Kuṣāṇa inscriptions	4; 100-150 CE	9; 100 CE
Guptan inscriptions	5; 600 - 800 CE	--

Table 3.1: Traditional Palaeographic Groupings of the Inscriptions at Sanchi

Palaeographically, the gateways[333] belong to a later generation of Brāhmī characters. Majumdar assigns them to group 3 (as opposed to group 2a for the balustrade).[334] The primary reason for dating the inscriptions of the gateways to an entirely later period lies

[328] Chanda, *Dates of the Votive Inscriptions on the Stupas at Sanchi.*
[329] Tsukamoto, *Indo Bukkyō Himei No Kenkyū (a Comprehensive Study of Indian Buddhist Inscriptions)*.
[330] Chanda, *Dates of the Votive Inscriptions on the Stupas at Sanchi*, pp. 14-15. He includes the Nagarjuni Hill (group 2) cave inscriptions of Dasharatha, the Besnagar Garuḍa (3 and 5a for the later *maharājā bhāgavata* inscription) pillar inscriptions, the Nanaghat cave inscription (5b), and the Hathigumpha inscription (6) of Kharavela into his chronologically arranged groups.
[331] Notable here is that Marshall dates Temple 40 to the same period. Their primary evidence rests with an individual named Data-Kalavaḍa, who donated portions of the ground balustrade of *stūpa* 1 and a pillar from Temple 40. See *The Monuments of Sāñchī* . Vol. 1, p. 269 for Marshall's discussion of palaeographic similarities.
[332] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*. Vol. 1, pp. 272-279. The very large date discrepancy in Marshall is a result of two contemporaneous scripts appearing on various parts of the gateways.
[333] It is obvious that the gateways themselves all belong to a contemporary period because certain content reappears. For instance, the imprecatory inscriptions are duplicated on the North, East, and West gateways. In addition, names of patrons also reappear. Balamitra, the disciple of Aya Cūḍa, apparently donated on not only the south gateway, but also on the east and north gateways. Similarly, the banker Nāgapiya, of Kurara village, donated on both the east and west gateways.

in the south gateway's reference to King Śātakarṇī. At the time in which Majumdar and Marshall were writing, the debate regarding the king's exact time was contested.[335] Cunningham, using a Purāṇic list, placed Śātakarṇī in the first quarter of the first century CE. Bühler placed Śātakarṇī as early as the middle of the second century BCE in contrast.[336] Majumdar's final assessment regarding Śātakarṇī is that he is Śātakarṇī II from the Hathigumpha inscription, thus dating the gateways to around the middle of the first century BCE.

As first noted by Chanda,[337] there are at least two forms of writing appearing on the gateways.[338] The imprecatory inscriptions bear what Majumdar calls an "ordinary" appearance while the inscriptions placed inside reliefs as part of the relief images or, at least, very near the relief images, are of an "ornate" style. Majumdar calls this ornate script stylistically beautiful and symmetrical.[339] Majumdar describes the ornate script as possessing broadened knobs at the tops of letters, almost like a serif.[340] The ornate style eventually becomes the *brāhmī* of the northern Kṣatrapa and Kuṣāṇa inscriptions. The *a*, *ka*, *cha*, *ta*, *da*, *va*, and *sa* letters all show the tendency to serif. In the end, however, the stylistic differences are not alphabetical differences. For sake of dating, all the gateways from *stūpa* 1 and the solitary gateway from *stūpa* 3 date to about the same period based on palaeography.

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[334] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*. Vol. 1, pp. 274-5.
[335] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*. Vol. 1, pp. 275-8.
[336] See Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*. Vol. 1, pp. 276-7 for a discussion on this point.
[337] Chanda, *Dates of the Votive Inscriptions on the Stupas at Sanchi*, pp. 4-5.
[338] Cunningham, *The Bhilsa Topes*, pp. 272-3. He noticed a difference in epigraphic style also, and that, on the northern entrance, one inscription was hidden by a later balustrade extension.
[339] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*. Vol. 1, p. 273.
[340] The ornate style can also be found at Bharhut and Mathura.

A problem for some previous scholarship was the assumption that minor discrepancies in the *brāhmī* script on the Sanchi monuments meant shifting eras. The overabundance of errors, variations in script size, letters size, and indeed placement all indicate that the inscriptional program was not uniform. One possible reason for these written problems is that the presumed architects of the monuments who are self-identified as ivory workers from Vedisa according to a gateway inscription from *stūpa* 1 were working in a medium that they were unfamiliar with. Additionally, literacy of both administrators in charge of pre-writing the records and the engravers themselves may not have been very high since usage of the *brāhmī* script was only just beginning to become widespread throughout the subcontinent.

In any case, over the course of my research I found five new, previously unknown inscriptions from *stūpa* 2 and studying them has led me to question the relative dating sequence of the monuments. Further, having dug deep into the relationships between the inscriptions themselves I noticed several arguments made by previous scholars in constructing their own relative dating sequence that could be improved upon. Therefore, in this section, I present the new inscriptions, revise the relationships between the inscriptions, and present a new relative dating sequence. For the purposes of this dissertation, the end result is the identification of two generations of donors, the first of which began at the earliest monument where we have donative epigraphy: *stūpa* 2. The entire relative dating sequence rests on the dating of the *stūpa*'s berm and ground *vedikā*-s.

Previously Unnoticed Inscriptions[341]

When I began comparing and contrasting what was found in Marshall, Foucher, and Majumdar's volumes[342] with my records I noticed a small discrepancy in the list of inscriptions from *stūpa* 2. Curiously, five pavement slab inscriptions could not be found in Marshall's list, Lüders' old list[343], or in Tsukamoto's more recent catalogue.[344] After carefully searching all known publications of the Sanchi inscriptions, I determined that these five donative inscriptions were unnoticed by previous scholars who all undoubtedly relied heavily upon Marshall or Lüders' list without ever revisiting the source material. Although the reason for their exclusion from previous lists could be many, it may be possible that these architectural fragments were misplaced additions by the ASI when the monuments were reconstructed, meaning that they were removed from a different area of the site and placed inside the circumambulatory path sometime before, during, or after Marshall's time. Here, I present the five previously unnoticed donative inscriptions and attempt to provide new insights into dating *stūpa* 2. Additionally, to flesh out what is known and unknown about the *stūpa* 2 inscriptions, I compare some recurring donor names to those found at *stūpa* 1 and Bharhut. I assemble evidence to augment the relative chronology of *stūpa* 2 and its approximate date compared to the other *stūpa*-s.

Just inside the north *vedikā* entrance is a pavement slab with the following complete donative inscription:

[341] I previously published and discussed these unnoticed inscriptions in Matthew D Milligan. "Five Unnoticed Donative Inscriptions and the Relative Chronology of Sanchi Stūpa II." *ARIRIAB* 18 (2015): 11–22. As such, a previous version of portions of this section were contained in that article.
[342] Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñchī*. Vol. 1.
[343] Lüders, "A List of Brāhmī Inscriptions."

Milligan Inscription 1 - N. Pavement Slab 1[345]
(in Śuṅgan *brāhmī*, 1st century BCE)

1 Samikāya vaghumatikaya dānaṁ

"A gift of (the woman) Samikā, from Vaghumata."

Figure 3.1: N. Pavement Slab 1

There is nothing particularly striking about this inscription other than the woman's personal name and location of residence. The name Samikā is a decidedly common personal name in the Sanchi inscriptional corpus, appearing in at least six other inscriptions throughout the site. Since this woman is from Vaghumata, I am unable to match her with other women with the same name who provide other places of origin. It is possible that the same woman over the course of time simply moved from Vaghumata to another place, such as the city of Ujjain (or vice versa, depending on the date of the inscription). It is also possible that she became a nun later in life, since at least one of the other Samikās found in the inscriptional corpus identifies herself as a nun. Vaghumata is a place of origin for at least two donors from Sanchi's *stūpa* 1 ground *vedikā*.

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[344] Tsukamoto, *Keishō. Indo Bukkyō Himei No Kenkyū (a Comprehensive Study of Indian Buddhist Inscriptions)*. Vol. 1.

[345] I thank Professor Harry Falk for his personal correspondence and minor corrections to my readings, which were first published in "Five Unnoticed Donative Inscriptions and the Relative Chronology of Sanchi Stūpa II."

Milligan Inscription 2 - N. Pavement Slab 2
(in *Śuṅgan brāhmī*)

1 vanikasa

"[A gift] of the trader…"

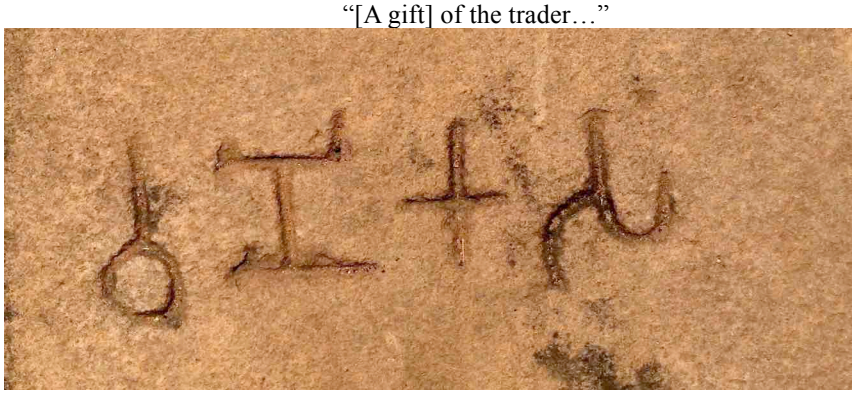

Figure 3.2: N. Pavement Slab 2

This brief inscription is obviously incomplete. The mercantile presence at *stūpa* sites in Madhya Pradesh is unsurprising given the hundreds of other donative inscriptions with references to merchants, various craftsmen, and guilds.

Milligan Inscription 3 - N. Pavement Slab 3
(in *Śuṅgan brāhmī*)

1 …lāya bhikuniya danaṁ

"A gift of the nun [Aca]lā [or Isilā]."

Figure 3.3: N. Pavement Slab 3

The fragmented inscription may be an incomplete rendering of an inscription found from *stūpa* 1's *vedikā*. That inscription reads:

Sanchi Inscription 156[346]
(SG2)

1 Nadinagarā Acalaya bhikhuniya dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of the nun Acalā from Nadinagarā."

However, comparing my photograph, rubbing and personal inspection with Marshall's plates, I find it unlikely. The name may also have been Isilā,[347] but is speculation only.

Milligan Inscription 4 - E. Pavement Slab
(in *Śuṅgan brāhmī*)

1 Samaṇeramatu dānaṁ

"A gift of the mother of a novice…"

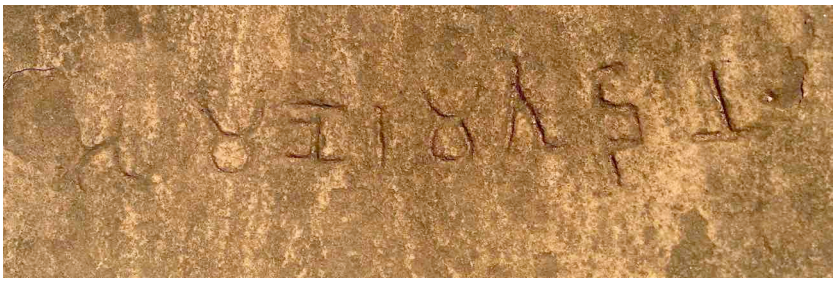

Figure 3.4: E. Pavement Slab

No possible connections were found to other inscriptions even though it is a complete record.

Milligan Inscription 5 - S. Pavement Slab
(in *Śuṅgan brāhmī*)

1 …gavipu… [bhichu]nina[ṁ] dānaṁ

"A gift of some nuns…"[348]

[346] MM 170.
[347] Tsuk. 408 / MM 422.
[348] Professor Falk suggested that the incomplete word may have been *bhagaviputana* (=Skt. *bhārgavīputra*) as seen at Sankisa. See R C Sharma. "A Śunga Inscription From Sankisa." *SPP, Bull. Mus. Arch. U.P.* 2 (1968): 51–52.

Figure 3.5: S. Pavement Slab

The incomplete letters were not matched with any previously occurring personal name or place of origin.

Dating the Vedikā from Stūpa 2

The closest and perhaps best reference for dating *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* based on its paleography and artistic style is the nearby buff sandstone Besnagar Garuḍa pillar donated by the Greek Heliodoros. As an envoy from Taxila sent by the Indo-Greek king Antialkidas at the end of the 2nd century BCE, most likely between 130-100 BCE, Heliodoros visited the court of Kāśīputra Bhāgabhadra.[349] According to textual accounts, after the fall of the Mauryan empire, Puśyamitra Śuṅga began the Śuṅgan imperial dynasty, kept the capital in Pataliputra, and maintained a close, probably mostly mercantile, relationship with Vedisa, the closest city to Sanchi and site of the Heliodoros pillar. The fifth ruler according to the Puranic list of Śuṅgan kings was Bhāgabhadra, named in the Heliodoros inscription. Coins bearing Heliodoros' own name were minted in the Northwest and further suggest a late 2nd century BCE timeframe.[350]

Some art historians have suggested a link among the flat, linear carving of birds, flowers, and garlands seen at the Heliodoros pillar in Vedisa, for Sanchi *stūpa* 2, the

[349] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, pp 141, 265ff.
[350] Osmund Bopearachchi. "Monnaies Indo-Grecques Sur Frappées." *Revue Numismatique* 31 (1989): 63–64. Also, see Willis, *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India*, p. 57.

Bharhut *vedikā*, and early stone sculpture at Mathura.[351] Although the Heliodoros pillar, Sanchi *stūpa* 2 (not necessarily the *vedikā*), and Bharhut all likely date from the late 2nd century BCE, Quintanilla suggested that the tradition of such stone sculptural production, at least at Mathura, probably started in the middle of that century. Despite the stylistic comparisons between the sites, the names provided in the inscriptions may prove to be something of a red herring for historians.[352]

For example, although there is a distinct "Bharhut Style" of carving found at Vedisa and Sanchi at the end of the 2nd century, the name mentioned in the well-known Bharhut gateway inscription, Dhanabhūti, was very likely not a Śuṅgan king at all. Traditionally, the inscription has been taken to mean that Dhanabhūti was a monarch within the Śuṅgan dynasty. However, the inscription very likely meant to say only that Dhanabhūti was a ruler at the same time as the Śuṅgas. Additionally, none of the ancestral names found on Dhanabhūti's gateway inscription appear on known textual lists of the Śuṅgan dynasty. Therefore, attempting to utilize the Śuṅgas as a catchall cultural sphere to which we can blindly place the four sites, Mathura, Vedisa, Sanchi, and Bharhut, is problematic. Not even the name Dhanabhūti, which appears at both Bharhut and Mathura can be taken to be the same person.[353] Thus begins the problem with firmly dating the inscriptions and our eventual use of relative dating based on style and paleography.

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[351] Sonya Rhie Quintanilla. *History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura*, London: Brill, 2007, pp 13-14.
[352] A comprehensive presentation of the dynasties and relationships to some Buddhist sites, see Shimada, *Early Buddhist Architecture in Context*, pp. 31-58.
[353] Quintanilla*, History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura*, p. 8-9.

Richard Salomon once cautiously pointed out that precise claims for paleographically dating inscriptions should "not be uncritically accepted." One remedy would be to "adopt Ramesh's principle of plus or minus one hundred years for the range of accuracy of paleographic dating."[354] Applying this principle to the problematic case of Sanchi *stūpa* 2, Bharhut, and the Heliodoros pillar pushes the solution farther away and further implies a need to proceed carefully.

Until very recently, there have been few new findings or attempts to reconsider the artistic and paleographic findings from Bharhut, which in turn meant that *stūpa* 2 at Sanchi was scarcely revisited as well. Fortunately, two new articles, one by von Hinüber and Skilling[355] and the other by Salomon and Marino[356] added new material for study in ancient central India. The *stūpa* site Deor Kothar yielded two fragmentary *brāhmī* pillar inscriptions in Prakrit and might be some of the earliest Buddhist inscriptions after Aśoka's edicts. They date to approximately the 2nd century BCE and present interesting genealogical inscriptions that could refer all the way back to the Buddha. In addition to new content, namely the genealogical-style list, the inscriptions provide new characters and sequences that can be studied in comparison to Bharhut and, perhaps eventually, Sanchi *stūpa* 2. Unfortunately, such a lofty goal is not the purpose of the present dissertation but such a future study might go far in assisting to unravel the mystery of

[354] Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy*, p. 170.
[355] Oskar von Hinüber, and Peter Skilling. "Two Buddhist Inscriptions From Deorkothar (Dist. Rewa, Madhya Pradesh)." *ARIRIAB* 16 (2013): 13–26.
[356] Richard Salomon, and Joseph Marino. "Observations on the Deorkothar Inscriptions and Their Significance for Evaluation of Buddhist Historical Traditions." *ARIRIAB* 17 (2014): 27–40.

applying relative paleographic dating to these sites.[357] From a preliminary analysis, the five unnoticed inscriptions studied here seem to date to the same or nearby paleographic generation as the *vedikā* inscriptions from *stūpa* 2, which would mean they also inherit the *vedikā* inscriptions' relationship to Bharhut and Deor Kothar, if there is indeed any relationship at all.

Some recent observations at Bharhut and Sanchi are worthy additions to the corpus of what is known about Sanchi *stūpa* 2. J. Hawkes suggested that "changes made over time to the railing [at Bharhut] and its carved programme suggests changes in the use of the monument."[358] This important point is equally applicable to the *vedikā* at Sanchi *stūpa* 2 as we know that railings and pillars were undoubtedly added as time passed.[359] Hawkes tentatively connected such stylistic changes with changes occurring within the monastic Buddhist institution itself, implying that the sites as well as the people and institutions involved in creating, administrating, and preserving them, were not static entities but rather living bodies in a constant state of flux. This is especially true if these sites were consistently inhabited and used over several centuries, which they would have been given their probable Aśokan origin. Therefore, it would make sense for the artistic styles as well as the paleographic intricacies to change and ultimately fluctuate

[357] High definition photographs of all the inscriptions from all three sites would be necessary for detailed comparison. At present, such materials are not within my grasp although in the future I hope that scholars may make digital files containing 3D image renderings of Indian epigraphs available on the Internet for processing and analysis. Scholars studying ancient Mediterranean epigraphy currently have this capability. See the website http://www.digitalepigraphy.org for reference. I plan to publish my own database of central Indian inscriptions by 2016. The database would be in the style of the Bibliotheca Polyglotta's "The Ashoka Library," found at http://www2.hf.uio.no/polyglotta/.
[358] Hawkes,"Bharhut." p. 10.
[359] Willis, *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India*.

between conservative and innovative, thereby further complicating nearly any attempt at relative historical dating.

While Hawkes' remarks are well taken, there are, at least according to F. Asher, some broad strokes that may be analyzed to determine a relative chronological sculptural sequence to early Buddhist art. Asher rightly corrected the view that Sanchi *stūpa* 2 was very likely not one of the first major monuments following the Mauryan period given that it rests on an artificial terrace below the rest of the Sanchi hilltop monuments.[360] Further, *stūpa* 2 enshrined what he called "lesser personages" compared to that of the Buddha or of Sāriputta and Moggallāna, famously enshrined on the hilltop proper in *stūpa* 3. Moreover, the so-called "crude" or "primitive" style of *stūpa* 2's reliefs definitely continued well into the 1st century BCE. Asher also revisited the assessment of the donor *seṭhin* Nāgapiya from Achāvaḍa whose name appears on both the *vedikā* of Sanchi *stūpa* 2 and *stūpa* 1. Some scholars[361] proposed that the two donors could not have possibly been the same since the construction of both *vedikā*-s was too far apart. Asher warned that the evidence was "marshaled to fit the assumption."[362] One potential hole, as Asher pointed out, in the assumption is that two distinct artistic styles could certainly not prevail simultaneously at a single site at the same time. Allowing for the potential of two different workshops to work the same site at the same time could, theoretically, allow for the possibility that the *vedikā*-s from *stūpa* 1 and *stūpa* 2 at Sanchi to be contemporaneous despite their distinctive styles and subject matters. Using all the donor

[360] Frederick M Asher. "Early Indian Art Reconsidered." In *Between the Empires*, edited by Patrick Olivelle, 51–66, Oxford, 2006: p. 57.
[361] Willis*, Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India*, p. 59.
[362] Asher, "Early Indian Art Reconsidered," p. 58.

names provided from *stūpa* 2, I reassess both the case of Nāgapiya and others in the next section.

In Asher's view, early Buddhist monuments might be grouped stylistically as opposed to regionally. "Very likely," he says, "there is a chronological order to these groups."[363] The order goes: 1.) the Mauryan group, meaning the pillars with lion capitals and inscriptions); 2.) the planar group, which specifically means the Bharhut and Sanchi 2 styles; 3.) the Bodh Gaya group, which refers to a small group of monuments (namely the Bodh Gaya *vedikā*) and some individual pieces of art; and the 4.) highly modeled group, which primarily features the reliefs from Sanchi *stūpa* 1 as well as sculptures from Amaravati and elsewhere. Asher ended his chronology of early Buddhist material culture at the Kuṣāṇa period. That period, he claimed, contains changes that are abrupt and mark the official transition out of the Mauryan influence, such as the introduction of the anthropomorphic depiction of the Buddha (although this particular part of the timeline is contested).

In the end, all the timelines more or less derive from Marshall, Foucher, and Majumdar's work at Sanchi. The recent observations on the Sanchi area by Michael D. Willis and Julia Shaw[364] have gone far in locating the nuances required for making highly informed guesses regarding the timeline and relative dating. The most widely accepted general timeline begins with Bharhut (and its inscriptions) in the late 2nd century BCE,[365] then goes to Sanchi *stūpa* 2 and its *vedikā* slightly later, then Sanchi *stūpa* 1's *vedikā*,

[363] Asher, "Early Indian Art Reconsidered," p. 63.
[364] Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India.*
[365] Willis, *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India*, pp. 55-57.

then the Sanchi *stūpa* 1 *toraṇa*-s.[366] However, even though the actual dates of this timeline are flexible—perhaps even very flexible—there are some vital remarks that must be considered.

First, these monuments were not built over night and may have taken many years if not decades to complete, especially the *vedikā* and gateways at Sanchi's Great *Stūpa*. A hidden factor may have been the money earned through donations required to employ workers to cut, transport, carve, and setup the structures. This process means that construction projects could have overlapped, as might the funding for such monuments. Second, with time, structures decay or are deliberately replaced or repaired for a variety of reasons. In such times, new uprights or cross-bars could have been added along with new donative records. Lastly, individual pieces of a monument cannot possibly date a whole monument. For instance, the reliquary and human remains from *stūpa* 2 may indeed date to an earlier period than the surrounding *vedikā*. Even though this fine distinction is easy to forget, if properly understood, it can contribute a great deal to filling in the missing gaps in our history.

Looking at the relationships between donors from *stūpa* 2's *vedikā*, which now includes the five unnoticed reliefs presented above, *stūpa* 1's *vedikā* and *toraṇa*, and Bharhut, I considered two hypotheses in attempting to determine a relative chronology:

[366] Two important works on Sanchi *stūpa* 2 highlight its imagery and pre-Buddhist cult themes. These are taken to be indicators of an early date. See Mireille Bénisti. "Observations Concernant Le Stūpa No 2 De Sāñcī." *Bulletin d'Etudes Indiennes* 4 (1986): 165–70 and Maurizio Taddei. "The First Beginnings: Sculptures on Stupa 2," 1996, 77–91. Klemens Karlsson. *Face to Face with the Absent Buddha*, Uppsala: Uppsala University, 2000, p. 80 follows Rowland, Benjamin. The Art and Architecture of India, London; Baltimore: Penguin, 1953, p. 88 in placing Bharhut between Sanchi *stūpa* 2 and *stūpa* 1 at no earlier than 100 BCE.

1.) *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* is nearly contemporaneous with Bharhut's *vedikā* and gateways and earlier than Sanchi *stūpa* 1's *vedikā*.

2.) *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* was a nearly simultaneous construction project with *stūpa* 1 and possesses an unclear historical relationship with Bharhut's *vedikā*.

To determine which is the best hypothesis given our limited evidence of archaeology, art, and epigraphy, I focused primarily on the epigraphy given the clumsy deployment of the famous Nāgapiya inscription in the past. Moreover, the five previously unnoticed donative inscriptions presented above may contribute some new data to consider.

The case of Nāgapiya the banker who appears on both *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* and on *stūpa* 1 railing is quite odd. The second hypothesis claims that the two *vedikā's* are roughly contemporaneous. However, the gateways of the *stūpa* 1 have always been considered later than even *stūpa* 1's *vedikā*.[367] There are a few possible explanations here: 1.) there were a series of descendants who held the name Nāgapiya, the *seṭhin* from Achāvaḍa; 2.) the banker was very young when he first contributed to the construction of *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* and was still alive, albeit very old, at the time of *stūpa* 1's gateway construction. The last explanation 3.) is that this is simply a case of coincidence. While the case of Nāgapiya the donor is far from resolved, the simplest explanation, that it is indeed the same donor but at different parts of his life, may be the best in that it fits both hypotheses regarding the date. Nāgapiya's inscription by itself supports the second hypothesis: that the *vedikā*-s, and possibly the gateways, were built together at about the same time. The timeline the Nāgapiya inscriptions create begins with *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* and ends with the gateway on *stūpa* 1. Given that in one of the *stūpa* 1 gateway

[367] For a working chronology of Vedisa and Sanchi hilltop as well a history of their dating arguments, see Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India*, pp. 83-95.

inscriptions Nāgapiya is a donor together along with a son, it feels safe to view the chronology between these three architectural constructions as being within the adult lifespan of Nāgapiya himself, since we know that there likely was not a tradition of naming the son after the father in this family. If he was perhaps a very young man when he first donated and a very old man when he donated again, we may have a period of 40-60 years, depending on how long Nāgapiya may have lived. Since scholars are now fairly certain that the gateway dates to approximately the turn of the millennium in either the very late 1st century BCE or the very early 1st century CE, this might put the inscribing of *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* at c. ~75-50 BCE, which is considerably later than the late 2nd century BCE date previously and commonly assigned.

To test this conclusion teased by the Nāgapiya inscription, I studied all the other *stūpa* 2 *vedikā* donors to determine their relationship, if any, to other donors at any of our key sites, namely other structures and inscriptions at Sanchi, at Bharhut, and the Sanchi satellite sites like Sonari. Unfortunately, given the limited number of donative inscriptions that exist throughout time, only a small number of donor names repeat elsewhere. To separate names that simply repeat from names that have a good chance at being the same person appearing at two different sites, I looked at commonalities in the inscriptions, which were the stated locality of the donor, the stated profession (which included monks and nuns), and relationship, if any, to other donors, such as monastic pupils, relatives, etc. I found nine donors, including Nāgapiya, which could have referenced the same donor. The most important ones are described below.

Some of the connections indicate that the berm balustrade from *stūpa* 1 may be contemporaneous or nearly so to the *vedikā* from *stūpa* 2. The nun Dhamasenā from Kurara is a donor at both places where the inscriptions use the same description to identify her.[368] Given the berm *vedikā's* small size and artistic style, it would make sense for it to have been built by the same builders or at least in the same style to *stūpa* 2's *vedikā*. Dhamasenā's case gives us a more definitive clue as to what to look for in other inscriptions.

The monk Sagharakhita from Kurara also appears in these two places: the *stūpa* 2 *vedikā*[369] and the *stūpa* 1 stairway/berm *vedikā*.[370] The connection between the names in these inscriptions rests on the donors' place of origin, like Dhamasenā's inscriptions. The *stūpa* 2 *vedikā* inscription reads *korarasa* ('[from] Kurara'). Meanwhile, in the *stūpa* 1 berm *vedikā* inscription the record reads *Koragharānaṁ* ('[from] Koraghara.') in the genitive plural. The plurality of the word is not the issue as it refers to the group of donors mentioned (Kāḍā, Subhagā, Pusā, Nāgadata Sagharakhita). However, the actual locality as it is spelled requires some explanation. At first glance, the village, Koraghara, seems to be an entirely different village from Kurara. However, Tsukamoto[371] and others[372] have rightly broken down the form into *Kurara-gṛha* and as such have included all the donors from Kuraghara into the tabulations for Kurara. If this is so, and it appears that the variants such as Kuraghara, and Korara are also included, then there is yet

[368] Her inscriptions are: at *stūpa* 2, 1.) Tsu. 722/MM 664; 2.) at *stūpa* 1's berm *vedikā*, Tsu. 548/ MM 562 and 3.) Tsu. 562/MM 576.
[369] Tsuk. 698/MM 640.
[370] Tsuk. 597/MM 611.
[371] Tsukamoto, *Keishō. Indo Bukkyō Himei No Kenkyū (a Comprehensive Study of Indian Buddhist Inscriptions)*, p. 830.

another connection between the two *vedikā*-s. The donor Sagharakhita from Kurara contributed to both *vedikā*-s and, perhaps later, sponsored a stairway *vedikā* fragment with (monastic?) friends. Sagharakhita was quite a busy donor since his name might appear in an inscription from Sonari, a nearby satellite site to Sanchi. At Sonari[373], the inscription reads "A gift of the monk Sagharakhita, who is the pupil of Aya Pasanaka." If this is the same monk Sagharakhita from Kurara, then he appeared at the reliquary site of Sonari later in his life to honor his monastic teacher, Noble Pasanaka. Coincidentally, Pasanaka himself may have had a long life as well since his name—again, assuming it is the same man—appears on the Sanchi *stūpa* 1 *vedikā* three times.[374] If such a connection existed, it would indicate that within the life of Aya Pasanaka, both some part of Sonari and the *vedikā* to *stūpa* 1 were constructed. Additionally, it could be that within the life of Aya Pasanaka the berm *vedikā* at *stūpa* 1 and the *vedikā* from *stūpa* 2 were also constructed. If Aya Pasanaka lived a fair life of 60 years, it is entirely possible that all these features date to a period within 30-50 years.

If the *vedikā*-s from *stūpa* 1 and *stūpa* 2 were built during the same period, meaning that they were both roughly contemporaneous with each other and also Bharhut, as the second hypothesis claims, then it would be a fascinating choice to build *stūpa* 1's *vedikā* in an entirely different style, size, and vision than the berm *vedikā* from the same structure. By this account, it seems more likely that the first hypothesis is true, with zero degrees of relative separation between Sanchi *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* and *stūpa* 1's berm *vedikā*.

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[372] Singh, "Donors of Korara," p. 73.
[373] Tsuk. 2.
[374] Tsuk. 130, 134, 134 / MM 144, 148, 149.

In this timeline, there is one degree of separation between *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* and *stūpa* 1's ground *vedikā*.

Just how much time passed between the two periods seems to be within the life span of a monk's career. The donation of Nāgila, the pupil of Aya[375] from Sanchi *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* may provide some clarity. There, the inscription reads "A pillar, the gift of all the relatives of *bhadata* Nāgila."[376] If some time had passed between the construction of each *stūpa*'s *vedikā*, then perhaps Nāgila, a monk tutored under a famous teacher known in *stūpa* 2, had in time become worthy of a title such as *bhadata*. This would make a donation by all of his relatives in his honor much more spiritually auspicious for them either sometime immediately after his passing or during his old age.[377]

In the same manner, Balaka, pupil of Aya Arahaguta from Sāsāda, appears at *stūpa* 2 but his teacher, Aya Arahaguta, appears as a donor on *stūpa* 1's *vedikā*. It is very likely the same Aya Arahaguta since they are both monks from Sāsāda. The inscriptions are unusually clear here in providing the proper connecting information of locality and profession. Again, the evidence points to the construction or at least funding of both separate *vedikā*-s during the lifespan and career of a single individual.

The donor Budharakhita at *stūpa* 2 gives us a possible *terminus post quem* for the relative chronology. Even though there are several matches to the masculine name

[375] Tsuk. 690 / MM 632. Most of the time in these donative inscriptions the word 'aya' functions as a title augmenting a personal name. However, there are some inscriptions where it by itself, either as a personal name or referencing an unnamed monastic.
[376] Tsuk. 88 / MM 102.
[377] Another possible connection between *stūpa* 2 and *stūpa* 1 lies with the donation by the monk Yakhila. At *stūpa* 2 he is stated just as a monk while at *stūpa* 1 he is a monk that is the monastic pupil to aya Devagiri. However, this is also a red herring because it is impossible to know whether this is the same monk. If *stūpa* 1's *vedikā* is indeed later it may just be a coincidence.

Budharakhita at Sanchi, none match exactly the place of origin (Arapāna) or profession (*sutātika*, 'versed in the suttanta-s'). Nevertheless, interestingly, there are several inscriptions from Bharhut which are worthy of mention. One[378] references a monk with two titles which are worthy of prestige: *bhadata* and *satupadāna*. *Bhadata* is a clear monastic title ('venerable') and *satupadāna* was previously translated as something that could resemble a monastic title. Lüders, Waldschmidt, and Mahendale presented the most convincing translation of that title, arguing that it is an "imperfect spelling for sattupādāna=Sk srishtopādāna [sic], '[one] who has abandoned attachment.'"[379] Another inscription[380] gives Budharakhita the title *pa[ṁ]canekāyika*, or '[he] who knows the five *nikāya*-s.' Again, the donor Budharakhita is given a prestigious monastic title associated with what we might come to eventually call Buddhist canonical literature, such as the known words '*nekāya* (=*nikāya*),' and *sutātika*' (=*suttantika*), which was found at Sanchi *stūpa* 2's *vedikā*. Lüders et al. argued against Barua in thinking that even though this Budharakhita is not expressly called a *bhikkhu*, he almost certainly was part of the monastic order. These few Bharhut inscriptions may form a strong but tentative monastic connection between Sanchi *stūpa* 2 and Bharhut, two *stūpa* sites that were previously thought to be contemporaneous based on their art.[381] If Bharhut is indeed slightly older

[378] Tsuk. 104 and also A58 in Heinrich Lüders, Ernst Waldschmidt, and Madhukar Anant Mahendale. *Bharhut Inscriptions*, Ootacamund: Government Epigraphist for India, 1963.
[379] *Bharhut Inscriptions,* p. 38. Most recently, Dehejia followed Lüders' translation: *Discourse in Early Buddhist Art*, p. 107. Previously, Lamotte translated it as '[one] devoted to the application of mindfulness,' in *History of Indian Buddhism*, p. 414. All of these translations emend Hultzsch, who took it as Skt. *sāstropādāna*, or '[he] who is versed in sciences,' and are substantial reinterpretations from Cunningham's who postulated that the word referenced a place of origin. *Satupadāna* does not appear as far as scholars can tell in any canonical literature.
[380] Tsuk. 186 / Lüders et al. A57.
[381] A possible problem for this line of thought comes in another inscription (Tsu. 176/Lüders et al. A55). In that inscription, a man named Budharakhita is called *rupakāraka*, which may be translated as 'sculptor.'

than *stūpa* 2's *vedikā*, it cannot be that much older given Budharakhita's monastic career and sponsorship at both sites.

Returning to the case of Nāgapiya, if Budharakhita links *stūpa* 2 to Bharhut, and Nāgapiya links *stūpa* 2 to the Great Stūpa's gateways, we can tentatively build both a *terminus post quem* and a *terminus ante quem*. The key here is that both relative chronological limits could be within a single human's lifespan. To recap, hypothesis one posits that *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* is roughly contemporaneous with Bharhut but earlier than *stūpa* 1's *vedikā* (and subsequently, its *toraṇa*). The second hypothesis works with the assumption that simultaneous construction projects may have put both *stūpa* 1 and *stūpa* 2's *vedikā*-s in the same time period. Although the limited evidence mustered here cannot definitively determine which hypothesis is closer to the truth, in studying both hypotheses using previously known art historical and archaeological arguments combined with an epigraphic survey and analysis, I posit a slightly augmented relative chronology. Bharhut comes first (although the *vedikā* there seems to be earlier than its *toraṇa*, as per the recurring theme at these types of sites), next comes Sanchi *stūpa* 2's *vedikā*, *stūpa* 1's berm *vedikā*, *stūpa* 1's ground *vedikā*, and, finally, *stūpa* 1's *toraṇa*-s. The major insight stemming from my small study is that all these periods could have been closer together than previously thought—so close together, in fact, that they might have been within a single person's lifetime, meaning 30-60 years.

Generations and Relative Dating

Given the prominence of the mercantile classes in these inscriptions, along with the presence of various kinds of craftsman, it could very well be that this is another, non-monastic Budharakhita. Or, possibly, the same Budharakhita was a monastic-sculptor, although this connection is pushing the limits of what these inscriptions can tell us.

The arguments linking Bharhut and Sanchi *stūpa* 2 based on artistic style and epigraphy are convincing, as are the attempts to provide a date using the Besnagar Garuḍa pillar. However, the evidence presented above suggests caution in assigning a precise date to these structures, let alone an early date, relative or otherwise. Given the possibility that Bharhut and the earliest inscribed monuments at Sanchi were all erected within a limited amount of time, such as the lifetime of an average person, a conservative timeline may be the best option. One such timeline pushes the *vedikā*-s from Bharhut and Sanchi *stūpa* 2 back from circa late 2nd century BCE into circa mid-1st century BCE to better align with the erection of *stūpa* 1's *toraṇa*-s.

Such an adjustment may coincide well with what Willis proposed as the date of Gotiputa and the Hemavata monastic teachers enshrined in *stūpa* 2. Willis proposed that this Gotiputa—who we mutually argue was *the* Gotiputa acting in and around Sanchi at this time—may have lived in and around the Sanchi area during the middle of the 2nd century BCE. Although Willis[382] suggested a similar date for the *stūpa* 2 *vedikā*-s, it seems much more likely that the *vedikā*-s were built sometime after the *stūpa* was built, which would have, in turn, been built sometime after Gotiputa and the others had died. Therefore, I propose a mid 1st-century BCE approximate date for the *terminus post quem* for all the Sanchi inscriptions from *stūpa* 1 and 2 (with the toraṇa inscriptions being the exception, dating to the 1st century CE), which would better link the paleography of the site internally since there is little development in paleography from *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* to *stūpa* 1's *toraṇa*.

[382] Willis, "Buddhist Saints in Ancient Vedisa," p. 228.

The five previously unnoticed donative inscriptions reinforce the solution presented here. Even though it is unknown whether these five inscriptions were actually originally intended to serve as pavement slabs at *stūpa* 2 specifically, it may not matter since the *brāhmī* matches nearly perfectly with the entire era's *brāhmī* at Sanchi. Some of the generic architectural pieces like pavement slabs could have been deliberately made as such in order to provide proper filler for an ongoing program of construction projects. After all, it is easier to shape and mold generic slabs like these into the proper jigsaw puzzle pieces than cross-bars and uprights, which were all cut with a specific purpose and place in mind at a specific architectural feature.

Now that a relative timeline for the Sanchi inscriptions has been established, I provisionally propose to split the Sanchi section of the timeline in half thus creating two distinct generations of donors. From there, I track the differences over time to formulate hypotheses from the resulting data. The first I call Generation 1 includes Sanchi *stūpa* 2's *vedikā* and Sanchi *stūpa* 1's berm *vedikā*. The label for this generation is SG1 (='Sanchi Generation 1'). For future studies, I would break this generation into SG1A and SG1B to account for the probable slight difference in time between the architectural features. The third and largest group of inscriptions populates Generation 2, or SG2 ('Sanchi Generation 2'). *Stūpa* 1's ground *vedikā* provides substantial evidence by itself but when compared and contrasted with the inscriptional data from SG1, the history of the patronage network at Sanchi may be highlighted in many previously unknown ways. Throughout the rest of the dissertation, SG1 and SG2 will form the framework from which I analyze the donative epigraphy at Sanchi.

3.4 HISTORY OF THE DONATIVE FORMULA[383]

Based on my research and analysis, there are two primary styles of donative epigraphy: the short-form and long-form. Short-form donative inscriptions are best exemplified by the hundreds of inscriptions at Sanchi studied in-depth throughout this chapter. The Sanchi short-form records are always relatively truncated in length and contain varying amounts of social data pertaining to persons who gifted towards the construction or enlargement of the reliquary site or sites. They always end with the word *dāna* to indicate that the object was the gift of the mentioned donor. On the other hand, long-form inscriptions tend to describe more details of a single donor and conclude with different formulaic words, usually a causative verb formed from either √kṛ or pra+√sthā roots. I explore the long-form formula in greater detail in Chapter 4 Section 3. Here, I attempt to flesh out the chronological development of marking short-form donations at Sanchi and treat them as the end-result of a donation process whereby the record is placed on a permanent material, namely stone.

Long ago Schopen astutely observed in these very same inscriptions that "[t]he vast majority of donors at [Sanchi and Bharhut] do not record their intentions."[384] He cited evidence from a variety of *stūpa* sites like Bharhut and Pauni, as well as early caves in Sri Lanka, to conclude that "they all wished in one sense or another 'to transfer the merit to another'—to their parents, or to all beings… [and] [t]hese same inscriptions give no

[383] An earlier version of portions of this section was seen previously in Milligan, "The Development and Representation of Ritual in Early Indian Buddhist Donative Epigraphy."
[384] Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism," p. 11

indication that any other doctrine, textual or otherwise, was ever known at these sites."[385] The same was also likely true for Gandharan donative inscriptions as Sten Konow once stated, "the aim of the votive inscriptions was not, perhaps, that they should be read and understood, but to ensure religious merit through the mystic power of the *akṣara*-s."[386] This common wisdom regarding donative inscriptions suggests that the inscriptions were meant to transfer merit to the donor through the gift to the monastic community and/or also via the donor's proximity[387] to the Buddha, meaning the *stūpa*, probably via their names.[388] Below, I will document the growth of inscriptional records from short, pithy administrative documents into records connoting symbolic power.

To document the history of these inscriptions, I will identify two sub-themes running throughout their usage at Buddhist sites. The first is that many short form donor records were not overtly used to mark the transfer of merit. Rather, they were records of posterity recording only the act of donation. Elsewhere, at a concurrent time, others at different sites realized the power associated with the written word and utilized donative epigraphy—that is, tangible written records written in a stone—to express an intangible transference of merit. In the end, I will hypothesize that the second strand of donative epigraphy eventually evolved or merged into the long-form donative inscription commonly found at Buddhist sites after the 1st century CE. Meanwhile, the short-form donative records for posterity were discontinued.

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[385] Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism," pp. 12-13.
[386] Sten Konow. *Kharoṣṭhī Inscriptions with the Exception of Those of Aśoka*. Vol. 2, Archaeological Survey of India, 1991: p. 93.
[387] Gregory Schopen. "Burial 'Ad Sanctos' and the Physical Presence of the Buddha in Early Indian Buddhism." *Religion* 17, no. 3 (July 1, 1987): 193–225.
[388] Schopen, "What's in a Name."

Short-form Donative Inscriptions

As aforementioned in Section 3.2, a prototypical inscription from Sanchi looks like the following:

Sanchi Inscription 275[389]
(1st century BCE)

1 isirakhitasa dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of Isirakhita."

I characterize Isirakhita's inscription as a representative example of a short-form donative inscription. In this section, I explore the history of such inscriptions and some of their possible uses at Sanchi. We may begin with a short excerpt from the Pāli Canon to contextualize the Buddhist milieu in which we find donative epigraphy like Isirakhita's record. According to the corpus of Pāli literature, there is a clear connection between giving gifts and monastic property, upon which we find our hundreds of short donative records. Giving lodgings or property to the *saṁgha* is the highest, most auspicious gift of all, probably because it required a tremendous amount of resources from the donor.[390] Similarly, gifting land to a religious organization for the construction of buildings for religious use is also the most meritorious out of all Vedic *dāna* gifts.[391] Monks are allowed to construct their own dwellings with or without a donor if what they build is with "found things."[392] In the *Pātimokkha*, if furniture and fabrics (meaning possessions

[389] MM 289.
[390] Vin II 147.
[391] Panduranga Vamana Kane. *History of Dharmaśāstra.* Vol. 2.2, Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Institute, 1974: 858.
[392] Vin 3.148-157. Traditionally, the Pāli tradition claims that at the beginning of the monastic tradition only *nissaya*-s, or 'resources' were permitted for use: 1.) scraps (of food)(*piṇḍiyālopabhojana*); 2.) rags for robes (*paṁsukūlacīvara*); 3.) lodgings at the foot of a tree (*rukkhamūlasenāsana*); and 4.) medicine of foul urine from cattle (*pūtimuttabhesajja*), see Vin 1.58.

within the monastery) are not cared for properly it constitutes a *pācittiya* offense requiring expiation.[393]

In the *Mahāvagga* section of the Pāli Vinaya*,* the gift of a monastery illustrates how a donation of a material item, namely that of an *ārāma* meant for dwelling, may have occurred. In the story, King Bimbisāra presents a monastery located in the perfect place to the Buddha for the *saṁgha's* use. My slightly truncated version reads as follows:

> Atha kho bhagavā yena rañño māgadhassa seniyassa bibbisārassa nivesanaṃ, ten' upasaṅkami upasaṅkamitvā paññatte āsane nisīdi saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghena […] Ekamantaṃ nisinnassa khā rañño māgadhassa seniyassa bimbisārassa etad ahosi: "kattha nu kho bhagavā vihareyya, yaṃ assa gāmato neva atidure na accāsanna gamanāgamanasampannaṃ aṭṭhikānaṃ aṭṭhikānaṃ manussānaṃ abhīkkamanīyaṃ divā appakiṇṇaṃ rattiṃ appasaddaṃ appanigghosaṃ vijanavātaṃ manussarāhaseyyakaṃ paṭisallānasārappan'ti"?
>
> Then the Lord went to the abode of King Seniya Bimbisāra of Magadha. Once there, together, with his monastic order, the Buddha sat in the appropriate seat… When King Seniya Bimbisāra of Magadha was sitting at a respectful distance, he thought: "Where might the Lord dwell that is neither too far or too near a village, that is easy for coming and going, that allows all kinds of people to approach [for the sake of *dhamma*], that is not crowded during the day, not too noisy or lonely at night, and is suitable for seclusion?"
>
> Atha kho rañño māgadhassa seniyassa bimbisārassa etadahosi: idaṃ kho amhākaṃ veḷuvanaṃ uyyānaṃ [...] Yannūnāhaṃ veḷuvanaṃ uyyānaṃ buddhapamukhassa bhikkhusaṅghassa dadeyya"nti. Atha kho rājā māgadho seniyo bimbisāro sovaṇṇamayaṃ bhiṅkāraṃ gahetvā bhagavato onojesi: "etāhaṃ bhante, veḷuvanaṃ uyyānaṃ buddhapamukhassa saṅghassa dammi"ti. Paṭiggahesi bhagavā ārāmaṃ. Atha kho bhagavā rājānaṃ māgadhaṃ seniyaṃ bimbisāraṃ dhammiyā kathāya sandassetvā samādapetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā uṭṭhāyāsanā pakkāmi. Atha kho bhagavā etasmiṃ nidāne dhammiṃ kathaṃ katvā bhikkhu āmantesi: "anujānāmi bhikkhave ārāman'ti.
>
> King Seniya Bimbisāra of Magadha had a thought: "[My] Veluvana pleasure park is [suitable for all of these needs]… I will give Veluvana to the community of monks with the Buddha at its head." At that time, King Seniya Bimbisāra of Magadha grabbed ahold of a golden vessel filled with water and offered it to the Lord, saying: "May I bestow this pleasure garden known as Veluvana to the sangha led by the Buddha?" The Lord accepted the pleasure garden as an *ārāma*, [a monastery suitable for dwelling]. Having given King Seniya Bimbisāra of Magadha a *dhamma*-talk, the Buddha rose up and departed. It was from this [event] that the Lord told the monks: "*Bhikkhus*, I permit the use of *ārāmas* for dwelling."[394]

[393] Vin IV 41-2.
[394] Vin IV 38-39.

Pouring water from a ceremonial golden vessel over the hand of the gift's receiver eventually becomes one standard method of dedication to conclude a donation to the monastic community in *Theravādin* texts.[395] Next, in this short story, the Buddha accepts the donation, gives a *dhamma* talk, and then gives permission for monks to stay in *ārāma*-s. Within the context of the historical development of the monastic Buddhist institution in India, in actual practice—at least according to our epigraphic evidence examined below—sometimes the early Buddhist community ended smaller donation and dedication rituals with acts of writing, as is apparent from the donative inscriptions from Sanchi and elsewhere, whether the writing was considered to be a byproduct or even a ritualistic ceremony unto itself.

In an effort to find textual warrant for the practice of inscribing names on a donated object, Schopen looked to the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya. There in the *Vinayavibhaṅga* was a story about how one monastery borrowed bedding and seats from a village monastery during a festival but was unable to distinguish whose property belonged to which monastery at the conclusion of the festival. This inevitably caused the Buddha to rule that property should be properly labeled.[396] Another story, found in the *Uttaragrantha,* gave the origination of pious religious donations and their accompanying votive formulae written on physical objects.[397] In that story, King Bimbisāra donates his deceased father's furnishings to the *saṁgha*. In order to not mislead others that the *saṁgha* stole the furnishings, the Buddha orders a specific formula to be written on the

[395] Wijayaratna, *Buddhist Monastic Life*, p. 30.
[396] Schopen, "What's in a Name," p. 62. Schopen cites the *Vinayavibhaṅga*, Derge, 'dul ba Ja 15a 7.
[397] Schopen, "Art, Beauty, and the Business of Running a Buddhist Monastery in Early Northwest India," p. 24. Schopen cites the *Uttaragrantha*, Derge Pa 154.b6-155a.6 = Tog Na 223a.5-b.7.

religious gifts: "This thing is the religious gift of King Bimbisāra." The gift should be displayed publicly. The formula here correlates nearly perfectly with what is inscribed on much earlier monuments like those at Sanchi[398] and illustrates the basic need to communicate ownership of property in writing for others to understand. It is possible that the later story found in the MSV is a remnant of the process began centuries earlier at places like Sanchi.

We may historically trace the developments leading up to fully systemized donative epigraphy beginning with the very first written records in India: the edicts of Aśoka from the third century BCE. Rock Edicts 8, 9, 12, written in *brāhmī* using epigraphic Prakrit language, tell how Aśoka used *dāna* to make charitable gifts to religious groups. For example, in Rock Edict 8, Aśoka writes:

Aśokan Rock Edict 8 at Girnar[399]
(3rd century BCE)

(A) 1 atikātaṃ aṃtaraṃ rājāno vihāra-yātāṃ ñayāsu (B) eta magavyā aññani ca etārisāni 2 abhīramakāni ahuṃsu (C) so Devānaṃpriyo Piyadasi rājā dasa-varsābhisito saṃto ayāya Saṃbodhiṃ (D) 3 tenesā dhaṃma-yātā (E) **etayaṃ hoti bāmhaṇa-samaṇānaṃ dasaṇe ca dāne ca thairānaṃ dasaṇe c[a] 4 hiraṃṇa-paṭividhāno ca jānapadasa ca janasa daspanaṃ dhaṃmānus[a]sṭi ca dhama-paripuchā ca 5 tadopayā** (F) esā bhuya rati bhavati Devānaṃpiyasa Priyadasino rāño bhā[g]e aṃñe

"(A) In times past kings used to set out on pleasure-tours. (B) On these (tours) hunting and other such pleasures were (enjoyed). (C) But when king Devānāṁpriya Priyadarśin had been anointed ten years, he went to Saṁbodhi. (D) Therefore these tours of morality (were undertaken). (E) **On these (tours) the following 3 takes place, (viz.) visiting Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas and making gifts (to them), visiting the aged and supporting (them) with gold, visiting the people of the country, instructing (them) in morality, and questioning (them) about morality, as suitable for this (occasion).** (F) This second period (of the reign) of king Devānāṁpriya Priyadarśin becomes a pleasure in a higher degree."

[398] The donative inscriptions potentially indicate ownership of the donation/fragment by the donor, many of whom were monastics.
[399] Edition and translation from E Hultzsch. "Inscriptions of Asoka." Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum 1 (1925), pp. 14-15.

In other edicts, such as Rock Edicts 5, 11, and the Queen's Edict, Aśoka describes how generosity and compassion should be promoted by his ministers. The extent of Aśoka's generosity also came on larger scales. For instance, the Barabar caves[400] were excavated for usage by some Ājīvikas for shelter during the rains:

Aśokan Barabar Cave Inscriptions[401]
(3rd century BCE)

FIRST CAVE INSCRIPTION
1 lājinā Piyadasinā duvāḍasa-[vasābhisitenā]
2 [iyaṃ Nigoha]-kubhā di[nā ājīvikehi]

"By king Priyadarśin, (when he had been) anointed twelve years, this Banyan-cave was given to the Ājīvikas."

SECOND CAVE INSCRIPTION
1 lājinā Piyadasinā duvā
2 ḍasa-vasābhisitenā iyaṃ
3 kubhā Khalatika-pavatasi
4 dinā [ājīvi]kehi

"By king Priyadarśin, (when he had been) anointed twelve years, this cave in the Khalatika mountain was given to the Ājīvikas."

THIRD CAVE INSCRIPTION
1 lājā Piyadasī ekunavī
2 sati-vasā[bh]isi[t]e ja[lagh]o
3 [sāgama]thāta [me] i[yaṃ kubhā]
4 su[p]i[y]e Kha ..... [di]
5 nā

"When king Priyadarśin had been anointed nineteen years, this cave in the very pleasant Kha[latika mountain] was given by me for (shelter during) the rainy season."

The Barabar inscriptions indicate a straightforward gift from Aśoka for the sake of shelter. The records only describe the basic gift from Aśoka. Although it is difficult to assess how the caves looked during the time of their excavation, the extant remains reveal

[400] For some recent editions and discussions of Aśokan inscriptions, including the Barabar and Nagarjuni caves, see Harry Falk. *Aśokan Sites and Artefacts*, Mainz: Von Zabern, 2006.

no elaborate antechambers, artistic niches or designs, which is a stark contrast to early Buddhist caves in the Western Deccan like Karle or Bedsa. Aśoka's gift was likely just funds to pay for the excavation itself. The record, then, was for posterity only, meant to be read and understood by future visitors.

Meanwhile, a *brāhmī* inscription from the Jogimāṛā cave outside Chhattisgarh shows how early inscriptions could be used to describe scenarios that did not pertain to donation or religion. The inscription, in so-called Māgadhī Prakrit, reads:

Jogimāṛā Cave Inscription
(Early 2nd c. BCE?)

1 śutanuka nama
2 devadaśikayī śutanuka nama
3 devadaśikya taṁ kamayitha valanaśeye devadine nama
4 lupadakhe //

"By the name Śutanuka, there was a *devadasi* [temple prostitute] who was loved by Devadina from Valanasi, a sculptor."[402]

To this effect we might also look to the Sitabenga cave inscription from the same area and date. One inscription there describes the pleasures derived from beautiful poetry:

Sitabenga Cave Inscription
(Early 2nd c. BCE?)

1 adipayaṁti hadayaṁ / sabhāvagarukavayo e rātayaṁ… dule vasaṁtiyā / hāsāv ānūbhūte / kudasphataṁ evaṁ alaṁga… ta //

"Poets venerable by nature kindle the heart, who….as the swing festival [of the full moon] in the spring season, when fun and frolic abound, people adorn themselves with…of jasmine flowers."[403]

Therefore, in the early post-Aśokan phase of Indian epigraphy, at least some authors and/or patrons found the epigraphic medium suitable for expressing content permanently in stone that was neither religious nor administrative. Despite some precedent to do

[401] Edition and translation from Hultzsch, "Inscriptions of Asoka," pp. 181-182.
[402] Re-edited and translated by Meera Visvanathan, *Writing, Gifting, and Identities: Providing Contexts for Early Brahmi Inscriptions (300 BCE - 250 CE)*, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2009: p. 73.

otherwise, the early Buddhist *saṁgha* deliberately chose to display short donor records instead of religious doctrines or other kinds of messages. The decisiveness present in the hundreds of post-Aśokan Buddhist donor records points to a heavy-handed if not outright administrative approach towards epigraphic record keeping, which benefitted both patron and administrator. The patron got their name displayed near a *stūpa* publicly while the monastic administrators could claim that the *saṁgha* was popular and well-funded.

The earliest strata of Buddhist donative inscriptions reveal some precursors to Sanchi's heavily systemized formula. These earlier inscriptions seem to be very similar to Aśoka's administrative edicts in contributed content, albeit with much less overall information. They tend to mark the construction of physical objects at these worship and pilgrimage sites, like pieces of *stūpa-s*, architectural fragments, cave *vihāra-s*, or *caitya-s*.

At Kesanapalli, a *stūpa* site in Andhra from around the second century BCE, are 15 inscriptions which label various architectural fragments, mostly stone slabs called *paṭas*. These inscriptions are short and to the point:

Kesanapalli Inscription 12
(Late 2nd c. BCE?)

1 oṇipino paṭaṁ [//]

"A [stone] slab of [a man named] Onipi."

Two of these simple inscriptions from Kesanapalli include the word *dānaṁ* at the end of the written formula in the space normally reserved for the word *paṭaṁ*. For instance, one record might be translated as "A gift (*dānaṁ*) of the Noble Badhaka, pupil of the Noble

[403] Re-edited and translated by Visvanathan, *Writing, Gifting, and Identities,* p. 72.

Elder Deva." Missing is the simple label of the established architectural fragment. In its place is this little word, *dānaṁ*, that becomes increasingly important with time.

At Bodh Gaya, also from around the late second century BCE or probably slightly later, are about a dozen inscriptions which utilize this same word, *dānaṁ*, to describe the physical gifts of actual people to the Buddhist community. Unlike at Kesanapalli, these records display unique conformity with their usage of the word *dānaṁ* indicating that at least at Bodh Gaya in the 2nd century these religious gifts and their subsequent display and written record were standardized while at Kesanapalli the end result of donation, namely the written record, was not uniform in its formula.

At Sanchi, there are several early examples dating to SG1 of exceptional records that do not match the near-complete uniformity of the other records, indicating that even at Sanchi, the formula was not completely formalized until SG2. Dating to SG1, six inscriptions utilize both the words *dānaṁ* and *thabo*[404] (='pillar') in the record, representing a semi-shift between simply marking the architectural fragment as a donation and identifying the particular donor. A basic one reads:

Sanchi Inscription 723[405]
(SG1)

1 nāgapālitaya dānaṁ thabho [//]

"A pillar, the gift of Nāgapālitā."

They all do contain the word for donation, *dānaṁ*, which is largely absent from the earlier inscriptions found at Kesanapalli except for one instance.[406] Also dating to SG1 is

[404] These six records are, for reference: Tsuk. 723 / MM 665, 731/673, 736/678, 780/none, 803/724, and 863/784.
[405] MM 665.

one inscription mentioning a *sūci*[407] (='cross-bar') and two listing a *silā*[408] ('pavement slab'). In total, during SG1, just nine of more than 257 (just 3.4%) donations utilize[409] this archaic feature of labeling the architectural piece within the inscription. Zero in SG2 contain this element.[410]

To briefly compare the frequency at which this formula element occurs we might turn to the older sites. At Kesanapalli, thirteen of fifteen donative inscriptions display this feature.[411] At Sarnath, three of several dozen use *thabo* (or some variation).[412] Meanwhile, at Bharhut, 39 of 123 donative inscriptions (or 32%) actually utilize this archaic feature, thus further highlighting the strangely near-complete absence of the feature at Sanchi (with very few exceptions).[413]

At Sanchi, further evidence suggests that the formula was still not yet fully established during SG1. One inscription from *stūpa* 3 records the donation of two separate individuals on one piece. One such inscription reads:

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[406] The exception is Kesanapalli inscription 1 Tsukamoto. It is possible that this inscription is a later addition to the site. However, it could also just be an anomaly.
[407] This record is Tsuk. 813 / MM 734.
[408] These records are Tsuk. 816 / MM 737 and 820/741.
[409] For the purposes of this calculation I am including the previously unmentioned *stūpa* 3 which contains very few donative records, some of which are fragmented. Cautiously, I might place the *vedikā* from *stūpa* 3 into SG1 based on the factors previously discussed. Therefore, the total number included in this mini-calculation is greater than the 257 which belongs to SG1.
[410] Quite problematic, however, are three donations recorded along the *stūpa* 1 *toraṇa*-s which do, actually, express this feature. Those inscriptions are: Tsuk. 383 / MM 397, 388/402, and 389/403. It is unclear what this exception to the exception means, but a number of possibilities may explain the situation. However, the discussion belongs in a future article.
[411] These inscriptions are mentioned as either paṭa-s, ('stone slab') or as *damurā*-s ('slab, donation stone'). The *paṭa*-s are: Tsuk. nos. 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, and 14. The *damurā*-s are: Tsuk. nos. 2, 6, 8, 9, 11, and 13.
[412] In Tsukamoto, they are: 76, 77, and 80.
[413] At Bharhut, two mention *silā*-s (1, 24), fourteen mention *sūci*-s (143, 146, 150, 151, 162, 164, 165, 166, 175, 180, 187, 195, 198, and 224). Twenty-three mention *thabho*-s (27, 30, 36, 42, 73, 74, 77, 78, 81, 82, 83, 87, 93, 101, 104, 111, 113, 114, 115, 118, 119, 124, and 134).

Sanchi Inscription 805[414]
(SG1)

1 [a]laṇasa bhikhuno dā[naṁ] [/]
2 mūlasa bhikhuno dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of the monk Alaṇa. A gift of the monk Mūla."

In an inscription from SG2, where the formula is largely set and adhered to, such a group donation would look like this:

Sanchi Inscription 102[415]
(SG2)

1 ujeniyā gohilasa visasa ca dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Gohila and of Visa from Ujena."

Comparing the two, the inscriber of the earlier record may not have known a more efficient way to record the donation of more than one person for a single, combined gift.[416]

Sometime prior to SG1, and certainly by the time of SG2, the famous sites of Sanchi, Bharhut, Amaravati, and others were enlarged to their present forms and nearly every donative inscription becomes "gift [*dānaṁ*] of such and such" (as described extensively above) along with an increasingly frequent appearance of their occupations, lineages, and villages. The uniformity, with very few exceptions, for these hundreds of records across a dozen sites or more is remarkable. By the end of the first century BCE, the total epigraphic corpus utilizing *dānaṁ* to mark the end of a donation numbers around

[414] MM 726.
[415] MM 116.
[416] Inscription 805 is exceptional because I do not know of any other inscription with such a two-line construction. It is possible that the second donor, the monk Mūla, gifted at a later time and requested that his name be placed alongside his friend Alaṇa. However, I find that unlikely because it does not occur elsewhere. If this were an option allowed by the *saṁgha*, then other donors, even monastic ones, would

more than a thousand, showing not only the popularity and remarkable conformity of the practice but the importance for the expansion of Buddhism into new regions and continued enlargement of known worship centers like the *stūpa* at Sanchi. By analyzing the exceptions to the developed rule I have shown some evidence of a developing formula over time.

Reading Records of Posterity

One of the primary reasons that Schopen made the blanket statement that all the donors in these donative inscriptions "wished in one sense or another 'to transfer the merit to another'" was[417] because he did not believe donative inscriptions were ever meant to be read. He once said:

> Several factors must be taken into account in trying to determine the intended readership of these records, the first of which is their placement. To judge by their placement, however, it would appear that a large number of early Buddhist donative inscriptions were never intended to even be seen, let alone read. The Bajaur Inscription of Menandros, and a sizable number of other Karoṣṭhi inscriptions, the famous inscription on the Piprawa vase, the Bhaṭṭiprolu casket inscriptions—all of these and dozens more were written on, or placed within, containers that in turn were buried deep within the solid fabric of monumental *stūpa*s. Once deposited, probably no one expected that they would be seen again, let alone carefully studied in twentieth-century India or Europe or America.[418]

To improve upon the point, Schopen cited the Mathura Lion Capital,[419] which would have been invisible if left *in-situ*, any number of random inscriptions from the "Western Caves,"[420] many of which would have been "too high" or "too dark" to read, and, last but

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have likely taken advantage. Instead, we see group donations appearing like they do in inscription 102 or on consecutive pieces.

[417] Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism," pp. 12-13.

[418] Schopen, "What's in a Name," p. 63.

[419] For this, Schopen cites Auguste Barth. "The Inscription P. on the Mathura Lion-Capital." *Indian Antiquary* 37 (1908): 245–50, particularly p. 246.

[420] Here Schopen cites A V Naik. "Inscriptions of the Deccan." *Bulletin of the Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute* 9 (1948): 1–160, particularly pp. 3-4.

not least, the gateway inscriptions from Sanchi, which are also far too high to be viewed, let alone read.[421] He posited that,

> given the number of early Buddhist donative inscriptions so placed, one must begin to suspect that this was not their function at all…visibility was either fortuitous or secondary and that the primary function of even these records was not to make their content public… in regard to those inscriptions that were plainly visible, [there was] the question of how many people who saw them could actually read them…[because] [u]nless the level of literacy in early Central India was far higher than commonly suspected, the same would almost certainly apply to the inscriptions at Sāñcī…[o]ne is back to the question of why such inscriptions were written at all.[422]

His final conclusion was that an inscribed person's name made that person eternally present for as long as that inscription remained since the donor only wanted to "leave their presence in proximity to another, more powerful presence [like the Buddha]."[423] The conclusion is sweeping, powerful, and rather reasonable. However, his argument does not account for the visual element of those many hundreds of inscriptions, at Sanchi and elsewhere, that *are* visible to the visitor or pilgrim and that have become, in a sense, an added text to the material landscape. Even though a vast majority of viewers will not be able to read the *brāhmī*—which can be admittedly difficult even if you do know *brāhmī* because of the deteriorated state of many inscriptions—the inscriptions are as much a part of the site as the bas-relief art visible throughout.

For example, as one approaches the Sanchi north entrance through the north gateway one will immediately gaze upon a very large[424] *brāhmī* donative inscription (dating to SG2):

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[421] Schopen, "What's in a Name," p. 64.
[422] Schopen, "What's in a Name," p. 65.
[423] Schopen, "What's in a Name," p. 72.
[424] In my research, I did measure the size of *brāhmī* letters. Unfortunately, my analysis has not yielded any noticeable results other than that the size of the letters from records at *stūpa* 2 is more or less standardized at one inch while *brāhmī* characters from *stūpa* 1 are strangely irregular. Vajiguta's inscription is certainly the most exception due to its sheer size and prominence within the visible field.

Sanchi Inscription 11[425]
(SG2)

1 vajigutasa
2 dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of Vajiguta."

Figure 3.6: Vajiguta's Inscription from *Stūpa* 1

The sheer size of the inscription makes it nearly impossible to not notice for anyone entering the circumambulatory path on the ground level. Vajiguta's inscription is quite exceptional for its size (and is the largest at the site). However, the placement of the inscription at eye-level for an average height person is normal for rail-pillar inscriptions. In fact, the only inscriptions not easily visible from the ground are coping-stone inscriptions that do sit more than ten feet off the ground.

[425] MM 25.

While Vajiguta's inscription is included into the architectural program of *stūpa* 1, other inscriptions are included in the artistic program of the gateways. A unique characteristic of the reliefs from the southern gateway are the three donative inscriptions appearing inside the visual field.[426] In each inscription, the donor's written agency seeps into the scene and is part of the scene.

Figure 3.7: Worship of the Headdress with the Ivory Worker's Inscription

Beginning with the lowest inscription (Image 3.2), found on the western pillar, facing east, the inscription reads:

[426] A fourth inscription appears on the south gateway but is illegible.

Sanchi Inscription 386[427]
(Early 1st century CE)

1 vedisakehi daṁtakārehi rupakaṁmaṁ kataṁ [//]

"A carving done by the ivory-workers from Vedisa."

Because the inscription appears within the architecture of the scene itself, the inscription is probably both practical and donative in nature, despite not containing the usual formula.[428] The inscription occurs just above the figures, on the roof portion of the architecture, as part of the scene itself. The other two readable inscriptions have the same physical relationship with their inscriptions, as the two donative inscriptions are found *inside* two representations of *stūpa*-s, showing a stylistic similarity between the physical locations of each donative inscription.

Next is the Rāmagrāma *stūpa* scene on the middle architrave (Image 3.3). The inscription reads:

Sanchi Inscription 385[429]
(Early 1st century CE)

1 aya-cuḍasa dhamakathikasa
2 atevāsino balamitrasa dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Balamitra, a pupil of the Preacher of Dhama, Noble Cuḍa."

[427] MM 400.
[428] The inscription states that at least some of the southern gateway's stone was carved—if not donated—by a local guild. The inscription's word for "ivory" (*daṃta*) indicates that the guild specialized in working with very hard materials and was familiar with carving reliefs.
[429] MM 399.

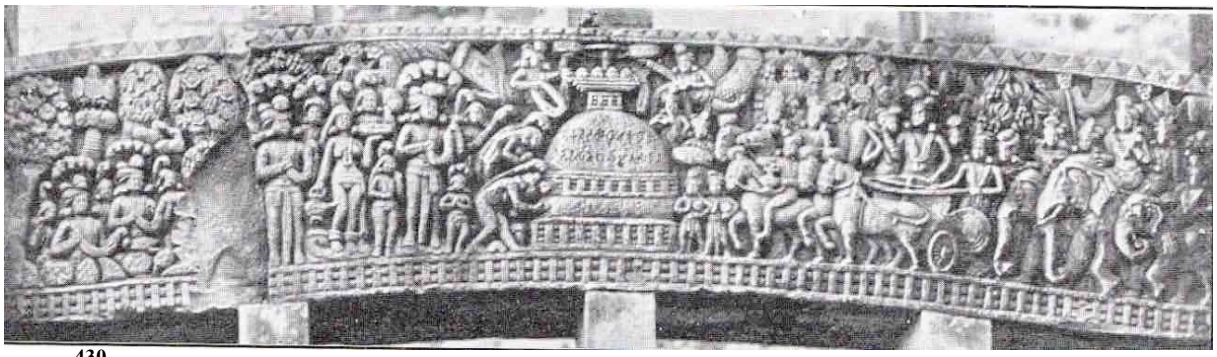

Figure 3.8:[430] Aśoka's Visit to the Rāmagrāma *Stūpa* with Balamitra's Inscription

A final inscription appearing within the visual field on the southern gateway rests on the erroneously[431] restored top architrave in the center *stūpa* of a Mānuṣi Buddha scene:

Sanchi Inscription 384[432]
(Early 1st century CE)

1 rāño siri-sātakaṇisa[433]
2 āvesanisa vāsiṭhiputrasa
3 ānaṁdasa dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Ānaṁda, a Vāsiṭhiputra, the foreman of the artisans of King Siri-Sātakaṇi."

[430] From Mireille Benesti, *Stylistics of Buddhist Art in India vol. 2* (New Delhi: Aryan Books International, 2003): pl. IV.

[431] Today the top architrave faces northwards and is visible from the upper circumambulatory path. However, originally it would have faced south and would have hardly been visible since it would have been more than twenty feet into the air.

[432] MM 398.

[433] The mentioning of king Śātakarṇī has been traditionally used to date the construction of the gateways to c. 25 C.E. Śātakarṇī likely refers to Śātakarṇī the first of the Sātavāhana line. According to the short chronology, he gained power in roughly 11 C.E. However, Vincent Smith, who Karlsson states as impossible to follow, suggests something beginning the 3rd century B.C.E., which is very improbable. Instead, Karlsson, *Face to Face with the Absent Buddha*, p. 96 relies upon an alternative date. Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India* follows Marshall's suggestion and agrees with this timeline as the sequence of construction clearly shows that the ground balustrade predates the gateways by a generation or two.

Figure 3.9: Central Mānuṣi Buddha *Stūpa* with Ānanda's Inscription

Both Balamitra and Ānaṁda's inscriptions fall well within the visual field of their respective scenes, the same as the ivory-workers guild inscription. Because the inscriptions occur inside each of the *stūpa*-s' *aṇḍa*, or 'shell' outer casing, there is a noticeable absence of garlands, drapery, or any other kind of adornment. Every other *stūpa* image not found on the southern gateway has adorning features, flower garlands draped across the *aṇḍa* and/or dangling from the *chattra*-s. In this way, the ivory-workers guild inscription, Balamitra and Ānanda's inscriptions are large even ornamented parts of the scene. No other donative inscriptions found on the gateways encroaches on the relief like these inscriptions.

The inscriptions of Vajiguta, the ivory-workers, Balamitra, and Ānaṁda, are all easily visible, even in the modern day with considerable wear. Even though the *brāhmī* was likely not read by many during the Early Historic Period, or even the modern period, visitors are still overwhelmed with its presence. The inscriptions were deliberately placed in these locations by the administrators who oversaw the construction (and inscribing)

program despite their presence fundamentally altering the viewing experience. Joanna Williams[434] has previously noted how viewing Sanchi's relief art some sixteen-feet into the air was indeed not too high to make out critical detail, as Robert L. Brown once argued.[435] Moreover, artistic achievements such as these unique reliefs with inscriptions inside of their visual field might be assessed independent of their religious context. A similar approach was recently called for by Janice Leoshko.[436] She wrote,

> [w]hen we acknowledge that there is more to inquire about the subjects represented or their specific Jain identity, the reliefs become quite intriguing witnesses to the past. More, not less, attention to aspects of their artistic qualities and achievements thus seems crucial.[437]

Applying such an proposal to the inscriptions more generally, too, may also help in divesting from Schopen's argument that since they were not easily understood they should be perceived as unknowable except to the inscribers and donors themselves. Nevertheless, the inscriptions may be understood, as well as admired, even by those who cannot read their words or recognize their intention.

Another alternative means to "read" the inscription is by their relationship to other inscriptions. Nearly every donor record that bears content that directly relates to another inscription, such as to other donations by family members (like wives, brothers, etc.) is placed directly near one another. For instance, at *stūpa* 1's north entrance, nearby Vajiguta's inscription, are five consecutive inscriptions that all record donations by the same family from a place called Tubavana. Their inscriptions read:

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[434] Williams, "On Viewing Sāñcī." *Archives of Asian Art* 50 (1997): 93–98.
[435] Brown, "Narrative as Icon." In *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia*, pp. 64–109. Honolulu, 1997.
[436] Leoshko, "Artfully Carved." *Artibus Asiae* 70, no. 1 (2010): 7–24.
[437] Leoshko, "Artfully Carved," p. 24.

Sanchi Inscription 2[438]
(SG2)

1 tubavanā gahapatino patiṭhiyasa bhātu j[ā]yāya dhañaya dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of Dhañā, wife of the brother of Patiṭhiya, a *gahapati* from Tubavana."

Sanchi Inscription 3[439]
(SG2)

1 tubavanā gahapatino patiṭhiya-nhusāya vesamanadatāy[e] dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Vesamanadatā, daughter-in-law to Patiṭhiya, a *gahapati* from Tubavana."

Sanchi Inscription 4[440]
(SG2)

1 tubavanā gahapatino patiṭhiyasa dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Patiṭhiya, a *gahapati* from Tubavana."

Sanchi Inscription 6[441]
(SG2)

1 tubavanā gahapatino patiṭhiyasa dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Patiṭhiya, a *gahapati* from Tubavana."

Sanchi Inscription 7[442]
(SG2)

1 tubavanā gahapatino patiṭhiyasa dānaṁ [/]
"A gift of Patiṭhiya, a *gahapati* from Tubavana."

All five inscriptions appear next to one another on consecutive pieces. Dhañā's inscription is on a cross-bar; Vesamanadatā's on the next cross-bar down; and then one of Patiṭhiya's three appears on the very last cross-bar.[443] His other two appear on two cross-bars from the next set of three. Many, if not most, other similar connections between

[438] MM 16.
[439] MM 17
[440] MM 18.
[441] MM 20.
[442] MM 21.

donors that I can locate within the epigraphic corpus at Sanchi appear like Patiṭhiya's: on consecutive, linked pieces. Similarly, when there are consecutive donations by the same person on consecutive pieces they all appear together. For instance,

Sanchi Inscriptions 32-34[444]
(SG2)

1 mulagirino dānaṁ lekhakasa [//]

"A gift of Mulagiri, a scribe."

Mulagiri is a repeat donor responsible for three cross-bar donations from *stūpa* 1. Mulagiri's situation is not uncommon—there are, in fact, dozens of repeat donors known throughout the site from SG1 and SG2. However, the inscribing of the exact same donative record on three separate pieces all placed next to one another cannot be unintentional or by chance. Again, the evidence points to a pre-arranged inscriptional program known at both *stūpa* 1 and *stūpa* 2 across two eras (SG1 and SG2). Even if a visitor could not translate the *brāhmī*, the same exact inscription on three consecutive pieces easily viewable at eye-level by a person of average height may still be "readable" in the sense that the repeated characters—not so different from a repeated image—can be processed by a determined viewer.

One last way to "read" between the lines of these inscriptions is to look at how they appear compared to their physical location on the *stūpa vedikā*-s themselves. When looking at the inscriptions together as a whole using a computerized spreadsheet, it becomes apparent that there are many similar patterns that one can identify beyond the

[443] On one of the linking rail-pillars is an inscription by a *upasikā* named Vudinā (MM 19 / Tsuk. 5). Her inscription does not list her as part of Patiṭhiya's family, but the idea cannot be totally ruled out since information was often left out of the inscriptions.
[444] MM 46, 46, 48.

recurring names like Patiṭhiya or Mulagiri. Many of the donors indicate in their records a place of origin, like a town, village, or city. Many of those same donors appear together on consecutive or nearly consecutive cross-bars, rail-pillars, and even coping-stones. My speculative reading of this phenomenon is that donors who donated at nearly the same time, perhaps during a festival or during a door-to-door solicitation[445] in their home villages all had their records inscribed together on pieces that were erected together. Put simply, it may be tentatively possible to study many of these donative records together as associated documents. Below are some representative examples of this phenomenon.

One example of such a cluster reads as follows:

Sanchi Inscription 44[446]
(SG2)

1 ujeniyā upasikāye sirikāye dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of Sirikā, an upāsikā ('female lay-worshipper') from Ujena."

Sanchi Inscription 45[447]
(SG2)

1 ujeniyā upāsikāye dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of a upāsikā form Ujena."

Sanchi Inscription 46[448]
(SG2)

1 [u]jeniyā dhamayasāyā matu bhichuniya dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of a mother of the nun Dhamayasā[449] from Ujena."

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[445] Here I speculate that "door-to-door" solicitation may have happened during alms rounds or during a similar kind of process. Unfortunately, other than canonical passages discussion alms, there is no further inscriptional evidence.
[446] MM 58.
[447] MM 59.
[448] MM 60.
[449] The word order for this inscription could leave open the interpretation that the mother's name is Dhamayasā. However, the personal name Dhamayasā fits the pattern found at Sanchi and elsewhere of monastic names beginning with devotional words like Dhama- or Budha- etc.

Sanchi Inscription 47[450]
(SG2)

1 ujenakasa vānejasa
2 isidatasa dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Isidata, a merchant from Ujena."

All four of these inscriptions belong to inhabitants of Ujena, a major city in ancient central India. However, unlike Patiṭhiya's family, not all these donors are related. Actually, whether they even knew each other is not determinable, although it is possible that the two *upāsikā*-s could have possible either been the same donor (with her name left out of the second inscription), been related, or just simply been within the same group. Still, it is difficult to view these consecutive inscriptions separately since they are probably intentionally clustered together, perhaps based on the time (or location) of their donation. That is not to say that all donors from a given locality, such as Ujena, have their inscriptions appear together—they do not in either SG1 or SG2—however, it is very likely that non-local donors (who will be discussed in greater detail later in Chapter 3) like these four will not appear alone. If we extend the parameters of the clustering to include all non-local donors, the numbers appearing in progression are staggering. In SG1, 22% of all donations are clustered non-local donors.[451] In SG2, that number rises to 56%.[452] One conclusion from this data might be that the order in which the inscriptions appear is pre-arranged, possibly according to various connections between the donors themselves.

[450] MM 61.
[451] That is 57 donations out of 257 total donations.
[452] That is 208 donations out of 372 total donations.

Even if the *brāhmī* letters cannot be read, understood, or processed by everyday visitors to the site, as Schopen argued, they are still readable in a variety of ways. However, if one can read and understand the donative records, as modern days scholars or the administrators who were in charge of the site during its construction can, it is possible to decipher these donative inscriptions in even more meaningful ways. To me, as the evidence appears to show, these records were not meant to be hidden. Rather, they were deliberately included into the artistic and architectural program with the intention that they would be appreciated if not even fully understood on a functional level. I argue that these are records for posterity, consciously placed exactly where they were intended for future pilgrims and visitors to acknowledge alongside the *stūpa* itself. Their predetermined arrangement might indicate their crucial role as administrative documents (of donor records, carefully organized together) put on display for the public to see, which is antithetical to Schopen's proposition that they were solely for the donors.

Intentionality and Merit Transfer

Schopen may indeed be right that some inscriptions convey intentionality and merit transfer. Several isolated early inscriptions from throughout the subcontinent set a precedent later adopted en masse after the turn of the Common Era. Chronologically, the phenomenon first appears in Sri Lanka. Some donative inscriptions from caves in Sri Lanka display a very early usage of inscriptions to show the intention for merit transfer. For instance,

Sri Lankan Cave Inscription 34[453]
(3rd or 2nd? C. BCE)

1 Gamaṇi-uti-maharajhaha(jhita abi-ti)śaya leṇe daśa-diśaśa sagaye dine mata-pitaśa aṭaya

"The cave of the princess (Abi) Tissa, daughter of the great king Gāmaṇī-Uttiya, is given to the *saṁgha* of the ten directions, for the benefit of (her) mother and father."

At least four other inscriptions from Sri Lanka describe gifts given "for the welfare and happiness of beings in the boundless universe" (*aparimita-lokadatuya śatana śita-śukaye*).[454] There are many questions surrounding these early donative inscriptions from Sri Lanka. First, are the dates for the Sri Lankan inscriptions completely certain? It would seem yes, at least for the Abi Tissa cave inscription since we are confident in the historicity of her father, the king. However, the others warrant further study.[455] If these inscriptions found in Sri Lanka do indeed potentially date to a century or more earlier than those at Sanchi and Bharhut then we may be looking at one location that used inscriptions for merit-transfer in written material culture that inspired imitations.[456] As its popularity increased, the old style of inscribed administrative records for posterity was discontinued.

The phenomenon appears at Bharhut, where a single inscription reads:

[453] Found in Senarat Paranavitana. *Inscriptions of Ceylon*. Vol. 1, Colombo: Dept. of Archaeology, 1970.
[454] Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions in the Study of Indian Buddhism," p. 12. See nos. 338-341 from Paranavitana, *Inscriptions of Ceylon* for their original editions.
[455] Another question pertains to the nature of the relationship of the "others" to the donors themselves. Were the parents, for instance, still alive at the time of the donation or were they deceased?
[456] Alternatively, separate Buddhist sites with donative inscriptions began to utilize similar formulas concurrently or at least separately if they did not have direct lines of communication.

Bharhut Inscription 163[457]
(Early to Mid 1st c. BCE)

1 sagharakhitasa m[ā]tāpituna aṭhāyā dānaṁ /

"The gift of Sagharakhita, for the sake of [his] mother and father."

Indeed the common donative formula well-known from previously analyzed inscriptions from Sanchi is slightly altered. The usage of "aṭhāyā" ("for the sake of") could be a very literal way to convey what Schopen called the "only actually attestable form of the … Buddhist 'doctrine' of *karma* and giving at Bharhut and Sāñcī."[458] Later inscriptions seem to do the same thing but with different linguistic constructions without the word *aṭṭha* to convey intentionality since it becomes more or less implied by the record of the gift itself.

One such innovation appears at Pauni, a *stūpa* site in Maharashtra roughly contemporaneous to Sanchi and Bharhut. A partially fragmented donative inscription reads,

Pauni Inscription 2[459]
(Mid 1st c. BCE)

1 … ya+[460] visamitāya dāna sukhāya hotu savasātānaṁ //

"Let the gift [of the lay-woman] Visamitā be for the happiness of all beings."[461]

The Pauni inscription shows something new. Gifts "for the happiness of all beings" expand the idea of intentionality. Now donors are knowingly transferring merit with words inscribed permanently on to sandstone. The Bharhut donation "for the sake of his

[457] The Bharhut numbers correspond to Tsukamoto's volumes, however Tsukamoto is following Heinrich Lüders, Ernst Waldschmidt, and Madhukar Anant Mahendale. *Bharhut Inscriptions*, Ootacamund: Government Epigraphist for India, 1963.
[458] Schopen, "Archaeology and Protestant Presuppositions," p. 11.
[459] The Pauni numbers correspond to Tsukamoto's volumes, which is a compilation from several separate sources.
[460] This likely reads *upāsikāya*, 'lay-woman' since the same donor, the woman Visamitā, made a donation from Pauni no. 1.

mother and father" and the Pauni inscription "for the happiness of all beings" clearly illustrate different intentions than the corpus of records found at Sanchi. Where these offer intention, almost all the hundreds of other inscriptions at Sanchi during SG1 and SG2 do not, indicating not only an contrasting style but an overwhelming uniformity of the style. When looking at later records, it becomes obvious that the written style and physical presentation changes.

Two other first century BCE inscriptions from central India demonstrate a different kind of donative expression that closely mimics the records from Sri Lanka and obviously contrasts the well-known contemporaneous donative formula from Sanchi. One comes from a stone slab at Kausambi and is a testament to the development of intentionality in epigraphy on architectural pieces that were not surrounding *stūpa-s*. A brown sandstone piece now found in the Allahabad University Museum reads:

Kosam Inscription 1[462]
(Mid-Late 1st c. BCE)

1 bhayaṁtasa dharasa aṁtevāsisa bhikhusa phagulasa…
2 budhāvāsa ghoṣitārāme savabudhānāṁ pujāye śilā kā[ritā]… [//*]

"The monk Phagula, the disciple of the honorable Dhara, caused this stone (slab) to be made at Ghoṣitārāma, a place where the Buddha stayed, for the sake of honoring all the Buddhas."

Interesting in many ways, the intention here, to honor all the Buddhas, is a not only very early case from the South Asian mainland but reveals an early awareness of the importance in worshipping divine figures, like Buddhas, and, presumably, earning merit

[461] I thank Joel Brereton for pointing out the unusual verbal construction in this inscription. Indeed, *hotu* is not common, especially in these early private donations.
[462] I follow Tsukamoto's edition, who follows the excavator. However, Quintanilla, *History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura*, p. 270-71 contains a slightly different edition.

for oneself by honoring the Buddhas in such a ritualistic manner with the written word. The Manibhadra inscription found at Masharfa near Kosam shows something similar:

The Maṇibhadra Stone Inscription[463]
(1st century BCE?)

1 namo bhagavate
2 sathavāhasa
3 mānibhadasa
4 gahapatikasa
5a ejāvatiputasa
5b vārisa[464]
6 puto gahapatiko
7 seliyāputo
8 kusapālo nāmā
9 tasa putena
10 gahapatikena
11 gotiputena
12 aśikāyaṁ kāritā
13 vedikā piyataṁ
14 [bhagavā]

"Adoration to the Bhagavata! A railing was caused to be made at Aśika by a Gotiputa, a householder, who was the son of one named Kusapāla, a householder who was the son of Seliyā and Vāri, the son of Ejāvati, a follower of Maṇibhada and a caravan leader."

While neither is exceeding complex, both inscriptions are mid-first century BCE north Indian parallels to the Sri Lankan cave inscriptions and contemporaneous to the short, pithy donative inscriptions from Sanchi, Bharhut, and Pauni. One describes the donation of a stone slab and the other the installation of a *vedikā* railing—two common architectural features found in abundance at Sanchi, Bharhut, Pauni, etc.—and both contain the intentions of the donors ("for the sake of honoring all Buddhas" and "adoration to the Lord!").

[463] Edition comes from Harry Falk. "The Tidal Waves of Indian History." In *Between the Empires*, edited by Patrick Olivelle, 145–68. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 150. However, the translation is my own based on Falk's for the sake of readability.
[464] According to Quintanilla, *History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura* p. 257, *vārisa* was inserted in small characters between lines 5 and 6. Since this stone has been lost, we only have old reports to go by.

Eventually the concept of recording intentions—for the sake of accumulating intangible aims such as merit—explodes, and writing in this way becomes an integral part of Buddhist material culture. For instance, an early Common Era potsherd inscription from Tor Dherai exemplifies how the words may be just as important if not more important than the item itself since, after all, a potsherd is only a potsherd. The inscription reads:

Tor Dherai Potsherd[465]
(1st c. CE)

Shahi-yola-mirasya viharasvamisya deyadharmo yaṁ prapa svakiya-yola-mira-shahi-vihare saṁghe caturdiśe acaryanaṁ sarvastivadinaṁ pratigrahe.

"This hall for providing water is the religious gift of the Shahi Yola-Mira, the Owner of the Monastery, to the Community from the Four Directions, for the acceptance of the Teachers of the Sarvāstivādin Order, in his own—Yola-Mira, the Shahi's—monastery."

The expansion of donative formulae into long, multifaceted explanations containing numerous references to self, community, family, and king becomes the standard nearly everywhere, including Sanchi, and on all types of material culture imaginable ranging from potsherds to spoon ladles to sacred sculptures. In the Kuṣāna period, donated images and their accompanying records adopted the formula. For example, on an image of Śākyamuni from Sanchi there is the inscription,

Sanchi Inscription 908[466]
(2nd or 3rd c. CE)

1 raño vaskuṣāṇasya sa 20 2 va 2 di 10 bhagavato śakkyam[un]eḥ pratimā pratiṣṭāpitā vidyamatiye pu...+
2 … mātāpitṛṇa sarvvasatvanā ca hitasu…+

"In the (reign) of King Vasukushana, the year 22, the 2nd month of the rain season, on the 10th day, (this) image of the Bhagavat Śākyamuni was installed by Vidyāmatī for … and for the welfare and happiness of (her) parents and all creatures."

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[465] Translation and edition is from Gregory Schopen. "The Lay Ownership of Monasteries and the Role of the Monk in Mūlasarvāstivādin Monasticism." *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 1996: p. 83.
[466] MM 829.

Another on a Mathura sandstone *bodhisatva* image records "…(sa)tāna+ hi[ta]sukha'rtha[ṁ] bhavatu /" or "May it be for the welfare and happiness of (all) beings."[467] Sanchi, previously the home of the largest number of short-form donative records for posterity, now becomes the home to lengthy written formulaic markers of intention with an abandonment of the old model.

Why are these longer types of inscriptions so dissimilar to inscriptions like "the gift of Isirakhita" from the first century BCE? I believe the answer lies in the objectives of the site record-keepers. The early BCE administrators at Sanchi seem to have a different agenda altogether than those at Kausambi or in Sri Lanka. Into the common era, at Sanchi and similar sites such as Amaravati we gradually see fewer and fewer short, pithy administrative donative inscriptions that record merely the "gift of so and so" and more complex donative epigraphs that echo those found in the Sri Lankan caves and those found elsewhere in north, east, and west India.

One theory for such a shift centers on what Vidya Dehejia calls "collective patronage"[468] where donors from all rungs of society contributed to construction projects, such as the enlargement or erection of a *stūpa*, as a unified egalitarian group. She argues that the pattern of patronage eventually changed in favor of a more heavy-handed approach that allowed elites and royals to carry the bulk weight of the donations. However, it is very clear from even this small sampling that persons of considerable power contributed large gifts to the monastic community from a very early time period shadowing the kind of patronage established in the Aśokan inscriptions.

[467] Tsuk. 909 / MM 830.

I would like to suggest that the Sanchi donative epigraphs and those like them from the first century BCE or thereabouts represent an attempt at something different altogether. Is it possible that the Sanchi inscriptions were intended to function primarily as simple records for posterity and not primarily as markers of merit making in the beginning? Preliminary evidence, hinted at above, suggests that the formula only eventually came to carry soteriological power. In the beginning, it seems, the formula was only a result of the donation process—an apparatus by which the donation was marked in stone as a record of thanks from the administrators to the donors themselves. The consistent and widespread presence of the word *dānaṁ* within the formula definitely carried great weight considering the word's history in South Asia, indicating that even if the transference of merit was not the singular concern it may have definitely been on the minds of the inscribers even if it was not quite explicitly stated as it would be in later donative epigraphy.

In my view, marking certain kinds of donations (namely those intended for construction usage) was a phenomenon rooted in something old combined with something new. With time, the language and makeup of the donative formula was representative of the changes in Buddhist institutionalization. Linguistic markers gradually became more complex as the sophistication of donation rituals increased in meaning. Early, pithy statements recording donations eventually became highly ritualized with words that carried much soteriological significance. I argue that the systemization of

[468] Dehejia, "The Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage."

donative formulae was a complex phenomenon that did not happen by chance or instantaneously.

3.5 THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE SANCHI NETWORK

In the above sections, I separated all the Early Historic period Sanchi donative inscriptions into two distinct generations, SG1 and SG2, based on a number of factors including the donors themselves, the architectural fragments, and their connective relationships. As a result, before delving deeper into the analysis of the patronage network it is important to review the demographics of the donors in each generation. Previously, the social data has been discussed and extensively presented in a number of academic works.[469] However, those academic investigations only counted the numbers as the scholars found them in Marshall, Foucher, and Majumdar's volumes and were not able to compare and contrast the numbers between the generations because they had not separated the donors as I have into SG1 and SG2.

Given the overarching project of this dissertation, namely the re-reading and analyzing the donative epigraphic corpus according to the premise highlighted in this chapter's introduction (3.1), it is necessary to briefly show how my updated generational separation, improved datasets (due to my own re-readings and corrections of the data), and improved correlations between fragmentary or poorly written inscriptions affect the calculations of the sociological data inherent in the inscriptions. Therefore, this section functions as an attempt to flesh out the roster of patrons at Sanchi according to their self-

provided details like gender, affiliation, title, and lineage (if any). This assists in the deeper analyses present later in the chapter by buttressing the known information regarding the cast of characters in discussion. Moreover, it is important to know about the living community and how it changed or did not change over time. The Buddhist *saṁgha* in and around Sanchi collected patronage from a wide variety of individuals from a number of villages near and far. Their individualized sociological data fills in some gaps of our knowledge pertaining to the who, what, when, and where of Sanchi's early history.

At Sanchi, there are 257 donations in SG1 and 372 donations in SG2. Statistically, because of the nearly 48% increase in total donations between these two generations, we might expect a generalized increase in nearly 48% in nearly all the countable categories by which we can separate the different anatomical elements present. However, the historical network of donors did not remain static in a vacuum and therefore, as displayed below, the categories of donors along with their features increase and decrease at random. Some of these changes over time are explainable, such as the number of non-local donors (discussed in section 3.6), while other categories, like gender, are much more difficult to explain. The presentation of these calculations in the sections below are primarily for context and future reference, although occasionally may be mustered for an argument when pertinent.

[469] See, for example, Willis, "Female Patronage in Indian Buddhism"; Roy, "Women and Men Donors at

Gender

Category	Number/Rate
Male donations	97
Female donations	122
Male donors	83
Female donors	104
Avg. gifts per male donor	1.17
Avg. gifts per female donor	1.17
Monk donations	44
Nun donations	52
Monk donors	34
Nun donors	41
Avg. gifts per monk donor	1.29
Avg. gifts per nun donor	1.27

Table 3.2: Gender in SG1

The earliest generation at Sanchi yields some surprising calculations from the extant evidence regarding gender (Table 3.2). Even though there are more female donors than male donors, the rates of donation for each group is nearly equivalent, indicating that the two groups were likely given equal opportunity for gifting. Essentially, I cannot determine if one gender group had more "gifting power" than the other because they donated in the same frequencies. Overall, it would seem that the larger number of female donors is probably a coincidence during this era. Once targeted for donation, women were no more or less generous than men.

When it comes to monastic donations, there are, as the statistics might predict, more nun donations than monk. However, just as in the broader gender rates of donation, the monastic rates of donations are nearly identical. Unlike the general population of men

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and women, I cannot say with any certainty that nuns were targeted for donation any more than monks.

Category	Number	Analysis
Male donations	193	99% increase
Female donations	151	24% increase
Male donors	165	99% increase
Female donors	114	9.6% increase
Avg. gifts per male donor	1.17	36% increase
Avg. gifts per female donor	1.33	56% increase
Monk donations	69	57% increase
Nun donations	57	9.6% increase
Monk donors	52	53% increase
Nun donors	48	17% increase
Avg. gifts per monk donor	1.33	73% increase
Avg. gifts per nun donor	1.19	51% increase

Table 3.3: Gender in SG2

The later donor generation provided more interesting data. The number of male donations and donors increased dramatically. Even though the sheer number of donations increased by 50%, the male donation and unique male donor categories rose nearly 100%. Similarly, the monk donations and unique donor categories increased substantially. Nearly universally, all the categories involving female donors increased only slightly, much further below the 50% universal increase one might expect from a static donator network. There are some takeaways from the changes, namely that it is clear that men were specifically targeted for donation much more frequently than women during SG2, although women were slightly more generous in their gifting rates per donor. It is possible that as Sanchi achieved legitimacy as a major node within a patronage network more donors thought it worthwhile to participate in the gifting, leading to the statistics as they appear in SG2. Tentatively, we can hypothesize that the large increase in

monk donors and donations during SG2 over nun donors and donations meant only that Sanchi was attracting many new monasteries geographically, of which the number of monk residents outnumbered the nun residents.

In the end, gender at Sanchi is one way we can track how the patronage network altered with time. As the data above reveals, in the beginning of stone architecture at Sanchi women supported the Buddhist *saṁgha* slightly better than men. However, in time, for reasons we might never be able to extract historically, men became the primary patrons.

Monastic Titles

Title	Donors	Donations	Rate
Atevasin	10	12	1.2
Aya	4	4	1
Bhāṇaka	2	3	1.5
Sutātika	1	1	1

Table 3.4: Monastic Titles During SG1

Title	Donors	Donations	Rate
Atevasin	9	10	1.11
Aya	7	12	1.71
Bhāṇaka	0	0	0
Sutātika	1	2	2
Bhādata	1	1	1
Paca-nekayika	1	1	1
Sādhivihārin	1	1	1
Sapurisa[470]	1	1	1

Table 3.5: Monastic Titles During SG2

[470] This title may or may not be monastic. For the sake of tradition, I have included on this chart because previous scholars labeled as such. Since the calculations presented here are no combined tallies, the singular donor and donation does not make a difference in the calculations.

A wide variety of titles were used by monastic donors at Sanchi. However, the statistics are skewed because of the prevalence of the title *atevasin*,[471] meaning 'pupil' and because the relative sample size is small, thus making all conclusions preliminary. This does not imply that many donors were junior monks. In fact, it may have been the opposite since the monastic donors had a preoccupation of listing their teachers even if they themselves had a title such as *Aya*, or 'noble.' The rare titles, such as Bhāṇaka or Sutātika, are expectedly used infrequently, denoting that few monastics obtained these honorable titles. Tracking the usage of monastic donors who possessed a title, whether it be that of a pupil or an honorific, yields some insight into the monastic *saṁgha* from SG1 to SG2. The number of titles used goes from four to seven while the total number of unique donors who are inscribed with such titles grows from 18 to 21. The total number of donations from these monastic donors increases from 20 to 28. According to the data above, the increased generosity of those elite monastic Buddhists possessing the title 'Aya' was very significant. It is possible that those particular donors were not as influential or wealthy during the earlier generation. Because of some kind of success both inside and/or outside of the *saṁgha*, those with that particular title came to possess more expendable resources (due to better alms routes, more access to elite lay donors, or access to more donors generally). Alternatively, it is possible that they did not have more expendable resources to donate and simply became more generous with the resources they did possess. Without access to more detailed financial records it would be impossible to determine the actual

[471] Although the word *aṁtevasin* may occasionally appear in literature outside of a monastic context, to my knowledge, a vast majority of the time it is used at sites like Sanchi it is used in a monastic context, usually to describe a lineage of teachers. However, we must leave open the possibility that some *aṁtevasin*-s had

reason for the growth in their donations. Nevertheless, comparing the honorifics to the population at-large helps to contextualize the importance of their donations.

Title	Donors	Donations	Rate
Monk	34	44	1.29
Nun	41	52	1.27
Honorific	7	8	1.14
Atevasin	10	12	1.2

Table 3.6: Detailed Breakdown of Monastic Titles during SG1

Title	Donors	Donations	Rate
Monk	52	69	1.33
Nun	48	57	1.19
Honorific	12	18	1.5
Atevasin	9	10	1.11

Table 3.7: Detailed Breakdown of Monastic Titles during SG2

It was fruitful to analyze the monastic titles on another level by breaking them down into Honorifics and *Atevasin*-s. For comparison, the above tables also list the total number of monk and nun donors. As the data shows, the elite monastic Buddhists, holding the Aya title as well as other honoring titles, who contributed during SG2 were significantly more generous than those during SG1. Further, in each generation, the *Atevasin*-s were far less generous than even the average monk or nun, indicating that their status within the *saṁgha* could be a factor in the amount they could have contributed towards donation, probably because of their junior status. To repeat the two hypotheses mentioned above, the elite monastics may have either had more resources to contribute or were simply more generous with their limited resources. Regardless of the actual reason, it is clear that the elites came to be the elites not just in titles but also in gifting power.

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not taken any vows. Despite this possibility, nowhere else is the word used, such as to describe pupils of tradesmen.

From this generosity, they may have improved their standing within the *saṁgha* or merely acquired more ascetic clout by demonstrating more dāna.

Title	Donor Change	Donation Change	Rate Change
Monk	53% increase	57% increase	3% increase
Nun	17% increase	10% increase	6% decrease
Honorific	71% increase	125% increase	32% increase
Atevasin	10% decrease	17% decrease	8% decrease

Table 3.8: Change over time of Monastic Titles from SG1 to SG2

I was able to further test the hypothesis that the elite monastic Buddhists were exceptional donors by calculating all the groups' change over time. Given the pedestrian increases overall by the monastic groups not holding an elite honorific title and the large increases in donors, total donations, and donor-to-donation rates for the elites, it is clear that the elites made a concerted effort to gift more and more often. The numbers of the non-elite groups, namely the generic monks and nuns as well as the *Atevasin*-s, indicates that the network experienced relative stability over time, with only the *Atevasin* numbers dipping slightly. I take this monastic-donor stability combined with the growth in gifting power of the elites as an indication that the network as a whole was reinforced continually between the generations by those who were at the top. What better way to reinforce the health of a network by becoming a larger part of the network?

Affiliation

Donor Group	Donations	% of Total	Donors	% of Total	Donation Rate
Unidentifiable	148	57.60%	93	51.40%	1.59
Monastic	96	37.35%	75	41.40%	1.28
Official Laity	6	2.3%	6	3.30%	1
Mercantile	7	2.7%	7	3.90%	1

Table 3.9: Donor Affiliations in SG1

Donor Group	Donations	% of Total	Donors	% of Total	Donation Rate
Unidentifiable	202	54.30%	149	53.40%	1.36
Monastic	126	33.90%	100	35.80%	1.26
Official Laity	18	4.8%	13	4.65%	1.38
Mercantile	33	8.9%	21	7.5%	1.57

Table 3.10: Donor Affiliations in SG2

At Sanchi, I tentatively break down all donors and their donations into four affiliations. However, the elephant in the room is clearly a group I label the "Unidentifiable" because they do not self-identify any affiliation nor can I reconstruct their affiliation based on other evidence (such as correlating donors from the same village or city with the same name during the same era). It was largely thanks to this nearly-anonymous mass of donors that Sanchi was able to undergo such expansion across two generations.

The "Unidentifiable" donors are known from just their names—however, we are able to know that some of them contributed more than one donation per generation. For instance, the donor Āvāsika donated twice. His inscriptions read:

Sanchi Inscription 717[472]
(SG1)

1 ājanāvā āvāsikasa[473]
2 dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Āvāsika, a resident of Ājanāva."

Sanchi Inscription 776[474]
(SG1)

1 ājanāvā āvāsi=
2 kasa dana [/]

"A gift of Āvāsika, a resident of Ājanāva."

[472] MM 659.
[473] While I take this as a personal name, it is possible that this is merely a reference to an anonymous monastic donor who is, as the name's definition implies, only a 'resident' of Ājanāva being that *āvāsika* may refer to a monastic in residence or even a servant.
[474] MM 718.

Āvāsika's donations were of a cross-bar and a berm *vedikā* railing, each from *stūpa* 2. Even though he is classified technically as "Unidentifiable," he was not truly anonymous. We know that he was from Ājanāva, a locality scarcely seen in these inscriptions. We also know that he cared enough about the *saṁgha* and maybe Sanchi in particular to donate twice, likely at separate times given that his inscriptions are from two different sections dating to within the same period. If he had any knowledge at all as to the construction project that he was contributing to he may have even known about some or all the famous monastic teachers whose relics were enshrined in *stūpa* 2. Āvāsika's story is far more complex than his donor records may indicate. The same is true for hundreds of other donors whose inscriptions only provide scant information like Āvāsika. They may be unidentifiable when compared to the monks, nuns, merchants, and various elites whose inscriptions get much more attention but they are not anonymous nor is their story frivolous. In fact, it might be argued that this very large donor-group is the most important donor group since their financial support of the *saṁgha* is at least equal to or greater than the rest of the donor groups combined.

The other three categories are relatively simple to identify. Monastic Buddhists, whether they are monk or nun, senior *saṁgha* member or junior initiate, nearly always identify themselves with their respective titles (which are explored in greater detail in the next section). Their stories

The affiliation category I label "Official Lay"[475] are slightly trickier to identify because one might be tempted to place all non-monastic donors into this section. However, this potential pitfall may be avoided by taking the inscriptions at their face-value and calculating, for this category, only those donors who self-identify with one of the following labels: *upāsikā* ('laywoman'), *upāsaka* ('layman'), or *gahapati* ('householder').[476] The mercantile category is also easy to identify because the donors identify their professions, which might include:[477] *Pavarika* ('cloak-seller'), *Seṭhin* ('guildsman' or 'banker'), *Sotika* ('weaver'), *Vaḍakin* ('mason'), *Vāneja* ('merchant'), *Asavārika* ('trooper'), *Lekhaka* ('scribe'), *Kaṁmika* ('craftsman'), or *Rāja-Lipikara* ('royal scribe').

Three possible hypotheses might be surmised regarding the "Unidentifiable" category: 1.) these donors deliberately chose to remain relatively anonymous and left out their affiliation/occupation; 2.) the administrators and/or the scribes lost the correlating details and chose to leave out information rather than to make it up; 3.) the donor-records refer to patrons who simply did not have more social data information to contribute in the standard fashion of the era.

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[475] It may be worthwhile in the future to explore this curious feature of the inscriptions further. However, for the moment, the position that the official lay community at Sanchi was actually quite tiny is untenable. A future study based on this particular data anomaly would begin by contrasting the official lay community with the monastic community. Shifting the numbers would position the monastic community as the overwhelming majority. A brief analysis would suggest that the *stūpa* cult was primarily supported by the regional monastic community.

[476] I have tentatively separated *gahapati*-s from the mercantile class because we cannot definitely say whether these *gahapati*-s were also merchants or carpenters. Some if not many probably were, as they were in the Pāli canon. However, here I am erring on the side of caution.

[477] As with all epigraphic Prakrit words and terms they are often misspelled when compared to their cognates in either Pāli or other Prakrits.

According to the evidence, however, these donors were not truly anonymous since many did, in fact, deliberately leave further identifying information such as their home village or the names of relatives. Take, for instance, the following inscription from SG1:

Sanchi Inscription 148[478]
(1st century BCE)
1 Bhogavadhana Dhamarakhitāya Sivanaṁdino mātu [/]

"A gift of Dhamarakhitā, [a woman] from Bhogavadhana, mother to Sivanaṁdī."

Not only does Dhamarakhitā self-identify her home village in Bhogavadhana, but she also links herself to a daughter named Sivanaṁdī (or a son named Sivanaṁdin). During SG1, 51 donor records do not contain other sociological details beyond a name. However, 28 of those (or 55%) are fragmented, meaning that the inscription is missing details, either singular *akṣara*-s, entire words, or more. In SG2, 43 records contain no further sociological details but 16 (or 37%) are fragmented. In other words, there is little evidence to suggest that the "Unidentifiable" donor affiliation group chose to purposely remain anonymous. Further, given that a majority of these "Unidentifiable" donors chose to include *some* sociological data but just not their affiliation/profession, I also tentatively conclude that the problem is not the result of poor administration or erroneous inscribing. The remaining hypothesis is that these donors probably did not have any sociological information to record that was pertinent to the *saṁgha*'s administrators who were in charge of keeping the records. With this information, I lack a better definition of the group other than "Unidentifiable" since "Anonymous" is not appropriate.

The most curious part of this data from SG1 is that the Unidentifiable affiliate group is also the most generous, both in total breadth of donations and individually.

While the monastic donors are more generous than the other two groups, they still do not wield nearly as much total donor power as the Unidentifiable group, indicating that the donor-network during the SG1 era heavily and deliberately solicited and possibly catered to the general population.

The second generation of early donors at Sanchi, SG2, exhibit nearly the same patronage patterns as the first. The only major difference is that the rates of donations per donors evens out amongst the affiliate groups. However, the Unidentifiable group still likely possessed the majority of the gifting power and leverage given that they maintained their levels of donation relative to the overall numbers.

Donor Group	**Analysis**
Unid. Donations	36.5% increase
Unid. Donors	60.2% increase
Unid. Rate	17% decrease
Mon. Donations	31.25% increase
Mon. Donors	33.3% increase
Mon. Rate	No change
Off. Lay Donations	200% increase
Off. Lay Donors	116% increase
Off. Lay Rate	38% increase
Merc. Donations	371% increase
Merc. Donors	200% increase
Merc. Rate	57% increase

Table 3.11: Change over time from SG1 to SG2

Despite the lack of real changes to the makeup of the donor-roster in terms of their affiliations, the increases of the two smallest groups, the Official Laity and the Mercantile groups, are substantial. Both groups increase by 100-200%, which, when compared to the

[478] MM 162.

expected increase rate of about 50% to compensate for the increased number of donations and donors, is significant.

In reading the calculations for donor-affiliations, I conclude that the donor-network remained consistent in the types of people solicited for donation over these two generations. It is interesting that both the Official Lay and Mercantile groups increased dramatically, but that could be due to the success of the first generation at converting new adherents and improving the name recognition of the Buddhist *saṁgha* in the region.

3.6 THE PATRONAGE NETWORK OVER TIME

In this section, I explore the network itself using several means. First, I examine where donors came from and compare and contrast their patronage patterns to determine how non-local donors were similar and different over the course of the two generations. Then I seek to explain the efficiency of the Sanchi patronage network through several metrics involving the total number of nodes from which many of the donors came from since roughly half (or more, as in SG2) of the total donations came from persons who self-identified as being from a non-local village, town, or city.

Non-Local Donors and Donations

The best way to describe the Sanchi patronage network during the Early Historic period is to begin with its nodes. I define a node as a non-local village, town, or city where some donors come from to gift resources to the Sanchi *saṁgha*. Their charity enabled large-scale expansion of the Sanchi hilltop which included the construction of new *stūpa*-s, buildings, and adornments to old *stūpa*-s, such as the elaborate ground balustrade now

encircling *stūpa* 1. Utilizing the relative dating sequence I argued for above, I compared and contrasted different features of the network, including its donors, their affiliations, donation rates, and donor-groups. The evidence I extracted from the data suggests that between SG1 and SG2, new nodes were added which brought new, fresh populations to engage. By looking closely at the non-local donor patterns, meaning the patterns emerging from studying donors who self-identify as being not from the Sanchi vicinity, I found a number of increasing factors to support the notion that the patronage network was growing, expanding, and becoming more efficient. Preliminarily, I define network efficiency in this context as the state of equilibrium between effort put in to locate charitable resources and the amount of resources extracted. Put simply, a network operating at maximum efficiency squeezes the juice from its fruits using the correct amount of pressure to reduce wasted effort. While the Sanchi network does not achieve maximum efficiency, the data suggests that it improved in nearly every calculable facet.

	SG1	**SG2**	**Analysis**
Nodes	37	55	49% increase
Donation Rate	1.15	1.24	8% increase
New Nodes	-	33	-
New Node Donation Rate	-	1.37	-

Table 3.12: Comparison of Nodes during SG1 and SG2

To begin, the network's total number of nodes, meaning locations eligible to charitably contribute to the Sanchi *saṁgha*, increased by almost 50% from 37 to 55. In addition to a larger number of nodes, the later generation added 33 more nodes that were not present in the first generation. Meanwhile, 15 nodes were not present in the donations from SG2, probably because Sanchi either lost touch with those nodes or because they

did not see fit to continue a charitable relationship with the leaders from those nodes. As with much of the data, the evidence can only go so far and cannot provide clear explanations for all increases, decreases, or rate changes between the generations. Instead, the data provides some lines in which I attempt to color within. The 33 new nodes which were not present in SG1 had a slightly higher donation to donor rate than average, indicating that these new nodes probably had less previously tapped donors since donors in the new nodes may have been able to gift more resources because they had not previously been solicited by the Sanchi *saṁgha*.

	SG1 Donations	SG1 Donors	SG1 Rate	SG2 Donations	SG2 Donors	SG2 Rate
Bhogavaḍhana	1	1	1	7	6	1.17
Katakanu	4	3	1.33	4	4	1
Kurara	29	24	1.21	26	19	1.37
Kuthupāda	1	1	1	1	1	1
Madalachikaṭa	2	1	2	8	6	1.33
Nadinagara	16	13	1.23	13	12	1.08
Udubaraghara	2	2	1	5	3	1.67
Ujena	8	8	1	46	41	1.12
Vāḍivahana	4	4	1	3	3	1

Table 3.13: Major Nodes within the Sanchi Patronage Network

As one might expect from any donor network, known nodes with a strong donor history are worth the repeat business. For instance, major nodes from SG1 remained major contributors. Nearly all the major nodes from SG1 maintained their level of charity with only one exception: Ujena became the most important node by far, usurping Kurara's total patronage from SG1 by almost double. Although we may never know the reasons for Ujena's rise to prominence, I speculate that shifting socio-economic conditions facilitated increases or decreases depending on the general prosperity of the populations living in those vicinities.

	Donations	Donors	SG2 Rate
Kaṁdaḍigāma	5	5	1
Madhuvana	6	5	1.2
Mahisati	9	8	1.13
Morājāhakaṭa	5	4	1.25
Navagama	10	5	2
Tubavana	6	4	1.5
Vedisa	17	11	1.55

Table 3.14: Major Nodes Added During SG2

Amongst the new nodes added during SG2 was Vedisa. Although only several kilometers from Sanchi, and a known presence along the Uttarāpatha trade route, Vedisa had zero presence in the patronage network during the first generation. It may have been that Vedisa was so close that it counted as "local" — but it may have also been that Vedisa was not made into a proper node at the time. A number of other new nodes during SG2 became large contributors, although it is difficult to tell if they became so due to the efforts of the Sanchi *saṁgha* or if they found the Sanchi *stūpa*-s with their own effort. Regardless, these new nodes donated at higher rates than the average node during this era.

	SG1	SG2	Analysis
Non-Local Unident. Donations	75	146	95% increase
Non-Local Unident. Donors	67	124	85% increase
Non-Local Unident. Rate	1.12	1.18	5% increase
Non-Local Mon. Donations	44	78	77% increase
Non-Local Mon. Donors	23	66	187% increase
Non-Local Mon. Rate	1.91	1.18	38% decrease
Non-Local Merc. Donations	2	19	850% increase
Non-Local Merc. Donors	2	13	550% increase
Non-Local Merc. Rate	1	1.46	46% increase
TOTAL Non-Local Donations	121	243	101% increase
TOTAL Non-Local Donors	92	203	121% increase
TOTAL Non-Local Rate	1.32	1.2	9% decrease

Table 3.15: Non-Local Donor Affiliations and Donation Rates

Non-local donors with an "Unidentifiable" affiliation increased dramatically, probably indicating that the patronage network had reached new populations. Non-local monastic donors increased substantially but their donation rate actually decreased, indicating that they were donating less per person. Non-local mercantile donors became a prominent fixture within the network. There was a general increase of around 100% in total donations and total unique donors. Meanwhile, the donation rate of all non-local donors dropped somewhat, indicating, again, that the patronage network now included geographic locations not yet saturated.

Efficiency of the Sanchi Network

In an effort to analyze the Sanchi patronage network over time, I have long sought a mathematical formula to test its efficiency. I first looked to basic rules in physics whereby efficiency is calculated by dividing output (of a given closed network) by input,

multiplied by 100. The result is a percentage of total actual work, with the remainder being the "lost" work (measured in Joules). So, if a person uses a hammer to hit a nail, there is an actual number that may be calculated to determine how much force hits the nail on its head and how much effort, also known as work, is lost from the imperfections in the hammer, hand, etc. After much deliberation, I determined that there is no such comparable single mathematical formula to explain the patronage network known in my data.

Instead, I developed several "rates" to measure the efficiency. To do so, I used common variables known throughout my data: 1.) Donations; 2.) Donors; and 3.) Nodes. Donations are simply the total number of donations for the given dataset while donors are the unique donors for the individual dataset (explained above). Meanwhile, nodes are the non-local villages from which the non-local donors travel. When assessed together over time, the overall efficiency of the patronage network itself becomes salient.

There may be more efficiency rates than what is presented here but for the sake of this small study I will analyze only four. They are:

1.) Donations per node

2.) Donors per node

3.) Donations per donor per node

4.) Repeat donors per node

By dividing these variables by the total number of nodes for each generation (SG1 and SG2), we come up with rates that can be compared and contrasted. Donations, donors, and nodes are described above and monastic donors/donations are as expected

(the donations and donors who self-identify as being monastic, either *bhikkhu* or *bhikkuni*). The only variable here which might be unknown is the category of "repeat." In my tabulations, a "repeat" donor is a unique donor who has given more than once in a generation. So, if the monk Anurādha from Goṇada village gives two gifts (which he has, in Tsuk. 601 and 603 / MM 615 and 617), he is considered a "repeat" donor. Repeat donors are few and far between, however some of the most prominent donors (like those bearing titles or professional designations) at Sanchi are repeat donors. We can properly identify these repeat donors because they self-identify with the same sociological markers in their donative inscriptions (affiliation, home village, lineage, etc.) and their gender known from the grammar. For reference, the number of nodes (non-local villages) per generation are 37 (SG1) and 55 (SG2).

Efficiency Rate	**SG1**	**SG2**	**Analysis**
Donations per node	3.27	4.42	35% increase
Donors per node	2.48	3.7	49% increase
Donations per donor per node	0.04	0.02	50% decrease
Repeat donors per node	0.38	0.62	63% increase

Table 3.16: Donations per Node

As we can see in Table 3.16, the general rates of efficiency for the Sanchi patronage network increases over time, indicating a strengthening network with better numbers of

donations, donors, and repeat donors. To contextualize these efficiency rates, I find it worthwhile to place them next to other statistics and rates. The results continue to buttress the argument that Sanchi established increased financial equanimity, sustainability, and success over the course of these two generations.

Rate / Statistic	SG1	SG2	Analysis
Donations per node	3.27	4.42	35% increase
Donors per node	2.48	3.7	49% increase
Donations per donor per node	.04	.02	50% decrease
Repeat donors per node	.38	.62	63% increase
Total non-local donations	121	243	101% increase
Percentage of non-local donations from total donation amount	47%	65%	- -
Non-local Donors	92	203	121% increase
Percentage of non-local donors from total donor amount	51%	73%	- -
Non-local gifts per donor	1.32	1.2	10% decrease
Non-local villages (Nodes)	37	55	49% increase

Table 3.17: Donations per Node Detailed

In context, I suggest the following analysis: as the network grows in number of nodes, so too does its ability to extract donations and new donors from the nodes. From SG1 to SG2, the percentage of both total donations and total unique donors who are not from the immediate Sanchi vicinity increases. In other words, this data shows a healthy network that is expanding at a rate by which it can also sustain itself. It is neither too small nor too thin and by SG2 the network is able to solicit primarily from donors who do not come from Sanchi.

Moreover, two of the metrics displayed in Table 3.17 above reveal a decrease in percentage from SG1 to SG2. The two metrics to decrease are ‘donations per donor per node’ and ‘non-local gifts per donor.’ Mathematically, as I have constructed the metrics, they are obviously connected hence their mutual decrease is unsurprising. One possible

reason why these metrics decrease while all others increased is because of the general increased efficiency of the networked system. No longer did the network require as many donations from each donor. In the second generation, the 'need' of the *saṁgha* in collecting non-local donations did not 'require' as many donations per donor because there was simply a larger number of donors (and potential donors). The network in the second generation may have been less strained and was therefore less congested due to a higher number of total donations from a higher number of nodes. In contrast, the first generation was slightly more congested as the number of donations required to fill the *saṁgha*'s quota seems to have been smaller.

One additional metric provides utility in determining the efficiency of the donor network over time. Unlike analyzing the non-local gifting pattern from SG1 and SG2, looking at the repetition of gifts adds a clarity into how the network operated. Repeat donors, which were introduced above for non-local nodes, are an indicator of donor satisfaction. In other words, donors who are repeat 'customers,' probably believed that they were getting what they expected, or more, out of their donation. Although we cannot be sure historically what a donor may have received from a donation entirely, the common denominator was that they definitely received their name carved upon the stone *vedikā*-s. So, at the very least, donors received this in return for their generosity—and maybe more. Therefore, repeat donation rates demonstrate how satisfactory this fruit was for their money.

	SG1	SG2	Analysis
Repeat Donations	46	119	159% increase
Repeat Donors	22	50	127% increase
Gifts per Repeat Donor	2.09	2.38	14% increase
Repeat Donors per Node	0.38	0.62	63% increase
Repeat Mon. Donations	28	46	64% increase
Repeat Mon. Donors	11	21	91% increase
Gifts per Mon. Repeat Donor	2.54	2.19	14% decrease
Repeat Mon. Donors per Node	0.3	0.38	27% increase
Repeat Elite Mon. Donations	2	11	650% increase
Repeat Elite Mon. Donors	1	5	500% increase
Gifts per Elite Mon. Repeat Donor	2	2.2	10% increase
Repeat Elite Mon. Donors per Node	0.08	0.09	None

Table 3.18: Repeat Donors in the Sanchi Network

The above table illustrates all the repeat donors and their gifting rates. Significantly, each category increases from SG1 to SG2. Most importantly, however, there is a substantial increase in the presence of repeat elite monastic donors and donations. It is necessary to note that the elite monastic donor group contained very few non-local donors. Moreover, the near invisibility of repeat monastic donors in SG1 reveals that those highest in the monastic order were either not interested in gifting more than once or were not capable because of a limited number of resources. By the time of SG2, elite monastic Buddhists were very interested in gifting several times, suggesting that they either had more motivation (or pressure?) to donate multiple times or simply had more expendable resources to spare.

The numbers concerning the repeat donors imply that the network itself was able to accommodate repeat customers, who either sent gifts with emissaries from their non-local villages or made a pilgrimage to Sanchi themselves. It is possible that the conditions on the roads were better thus allowing potential non-local to make repeat journeys or that

the allure of donating to the Sanchi hilltop was strong enough to convince non-locals to travel more frequently. It is not within the scope of my present study to link these increases in the patronage network to socio-economic developments occurring in the region; nevertheless, doing so would dramatically improve our understanding of the how and why the Sanchi patronage network was able to take advantage of changes at the societal level. For now, given the timeframe between the generations, probably between 25 and 50 years, I might speculate that everything within the network was probably better, ranging from the amount of expendable wealth to the conditions on the road and in the villages.

On the opposite side of the network are the donors who do not self-identify as being a resident of one village/town/city or another. These might be assumed to be locals, although it is very possible that they have merely chosen to remain locationally anonymous, even though it is very unlikely given my argument above. In any case, analyzing these types of donors together yields altogether different results than the non-local donors, indicating that locality partially determines the amount one donates. The table for so-called local donors is below:

Rate / Statistic	SG1	SG2	Analysis
Donations	106	111	5% increase
Donors	98	97	No change
Donations per donor	1.08	1.14	5.5% increase
Repeat Donors	8	14	75% increase
Repeat Donations	17	36	112% increase
Repeat donations per donor	2.13	2.57	21% increase
Percentage of local donations from total donation amount	41%	30%	27% decrease

Table 3.19: Local Donors at Sanchi

The most obvious data shows that between the generations there is essentially no increase in local patronage. In fact, while local donors contributed up to 41% of the total amount of donations in SG1, they only contributed 30% of the total donations in SG2. On the other hand, the number of repeat donors rose considerably, meaning that some local donors became much more generous and/or had more resources to gift. Again, the shift to a higher number of donors who come from non-local places suggests that the network became increasingly healthy and vibrant from SG1 to SG2 and did not have to rely upon as much local support to fund upgrades to the Sanchi hilltop.

Rate / Statistic	SG1	SG2	Analysis
Local monastic donations	50	48	No change
Local monastic donors	46	40	13% decrease
Local monastic donation rate	1.08	1.2	11% increase
Local repeat monastic donations	9	19	111% increase
Local repeat monastic donors	4	8	100% increase
Local repeat monastic donation rate	2.25	2.38	6% increase
Non-Local monastic donations	46	80	74% increase
Non-Local monastic donors	37	66	78% increase
Non-Local monastic donation rate	1.24	1.21	2% decrease
Non-Local repeat monastic donations	21	36	71% increase
Non-Local repeat monastic donors	9	14	56% increase
Non-Local repeat monastic donation rate	2.33	2.57	10% increase

Table 3.20: Local and Non-Local Monastic Donors

One final piece of evidence speaks to the vibrancy of the donor network. The difference between local and non-local monastic Buddhist donors reveals that it was non-local monastic Buddhists who took a strong interest in strengthening the network through their contributions. Between the generations, local monastic Buddhists only maintained their levels of participation in the donation habit while the non-local monastic Buddhists increased their presence energetically. The strengthening of repeat monastic donors who were local also indicates that the local donor network entrenched itself and was likely

reinforced, possibly by proving that the local *saṁgha* was a stable and worthy institution. Meanwhile, the non-local monastic donors nearly doubled their efforts and maintained a donation rate at nearly the same frequency. To me, this affirms that the network was safely expanding into new territories and garnering new donors alongside, presumably, new converts, especially combined with the fact that the number of nodes within the network expanded from 37 to 55 between the generations, which was a 49% increase in the number of possible locations the *saṁgha* was able to preach, beg for alms, and spread their brand.

Rate / Statistic	SG1	SG2	Analysis
Local elite monastic donations	5	9	80% increase
Local elite monastic donors	4	6	50% increase
Local elite monastic donation rate	1.25	1.5	20% increase
Local elite repeat monastic donations	2	5	150% increase
Local elite repeat monastic donors	1	2	100% increase
Local elite repeat monastic donation rate	2	2.5	25% increase
Non-Local elite monastic donations	3	8	167% increase
Non-Local elite monastic donors	3	5	67% increase
Non-Local elite monastic donation rate	1	1.6	60% increase
Non-Local elite repeat monastic donations	0	6	600% increase
Non-Local elite repeat monastic donors	0	3	300% increase
Non-Local elite repeat monastic donation rate	0	2	200% increase

Table 3.21: Elite Local and Non-Local Monastic Donors

Looking at local and non-local elite monastic Buddhists, meaning those who had their names inscribed with honorifics further corroborates the conclusion that non-local monastic Buddhists rose to the forefront of the Sanchi donor network by the second generation. Although the donation numbers for the elite monastic Buddhists rose in all areas, it was the significant appearance and presence of their numbers in SG2 that support the argument. While nearly invisible in SG1, in SG2 the elite monastic Buddhists became

a cornerstone for gifting, possibly providing leadership for the community by demonstrating their own generosity. In short, by SG2, the Sanchi patronage network established itself as efficient and growing with identifiable leaders at the top.

3.7 CONCLUSION

What is presented in this chapter represents the earliest known layer to the complex process of representing patronage materially. I have attempted to accomplish several tasks. First, I sought to identify a way to study donative inscriptions together and separately using their distinct elements. Those elements, like the donor's demographics and locality, form the data which I have studied and presented. Additionally, in reading the inscriptions historically and culturally I was able to highlight several ways the inscriptions functioned as a colophon to the *in-situ* material culture already present at Sanchi, namely the architecture, art, and *stūpa*-s. As a colophon, the inscriptions demonstrated that Sanchi contained multiple layers, one of which was religious and another that was pragmatic and administrative. Sanchi's famous gateways are filled with bas-relief art that is occasionally "written over" with an inscription. The words themselves contain important information but the words are also, in these cases, part of the text and art itself. The inscriptions have become inseparable from the original artistic work.

Next, I revisited the dating scheme of the Sanchi epigraphic corpus and argued for a conservative relative dating framework from which we can track changes in habits over time. Two donor generations emerged to provide the historical chronological bookends for the short-form styled donative epigraphy from *stūpa*-s 1 and 2. By identifying a

concise dating range I was able to enhance a statistical analysis of the patronage network as it changed throughout time.

A third argument made in this chapter pertained to the history of the short-form style epigraphic formula. Many records could have initially intended to serve as a functional if not administrative instruments rather than as a markers of religious piety. Donative inscriptions may have even served as precursors to written account-documents (which may have eventually been counted on materials like birch-bark). The records found at Sanchi and dozens of other early Indian Buddhist archaeological sites, then, allowed for a crude form of documentation. In time, as the institution both grew in power and breadth, and achieved financial solvency, the non-mobile records were no longer needed and transformed within a century or so into different kinds of documents that supplied the community with an opportunity to display the fruits of religious *dāna* in the open-air whereby donors could find their names engraved for eternity. Donors who were influential enough to have their names carved into stone in prestigious locations, such as near the relics of the Buddha, may have accumulated religious merit as well as social capital within their local community. The few documented inscriptions from Sanchi, Bharhut, Pauni, and Sri Lanka indicating the donor's intention to transfer merit may have served as a precursor for the eventual long-form style donative inscription, studied in greater detail in Chapter 4 Section 3.

Finally, I argued that the Sanchi donative inscriptions represent a patronage network with an increasing number of nodes and donors with varying demographics. Many donors, like one I examined named Āvāsika, were part of a category I labeled

"Unidentifiable" because their donor records did not provide as much social data available for study as monastics, merchants, and other elite donors. However, their records *en masse* are probably the most important ones because it was their financial support that equaled or surpassed all other donor groups combined. Their story is not inconsequential; their story could be the most significant because it represents the everyday Buddhist who visited or contributed to Sanchi.

Beyond the donors themselves, I endeavored to test the network's performance as a whole across the two generations and found support showing that as the network grew between the generations so too did did its ability to extract donations and find new donors, thus displaying vibrancy, a key trait for a healthy and growing network. Additionally, over time, elite monastic donors grew in number and, perhaps, power by the second generation, possibly indicating that a particular group of monastics may have obtained influence over certain elements important to patronage. My conclusion from analyzing the history of the short-form donative formula and from testing the network's changes over time is that detailed record-keeping of a roster of patrons provided both monastic administrators and everyday visitors to Sanchi with a way to bridge generations. Records for posterity like these functioned for those in the past—namely the donors—and for those who had yet to come (future visitors and donors).

CHAPTER 4

FINANCIERS AND RELIGIOUS ACTORS

4.1 OVERVIEW

Despite many deep, scholarly inquiries, the patrons and monastic overseers who financed monuments at places like Sanchi remain in relative obscurity. The aim of this chapter is to review one group who was intimately involved *with* and perhaps responsible *for* major portions of the *stūpa*-s at Sanchi. This group is identified in donative inscriptions which record donors' metronymic—that is, their lineage as traced through an ancestral mother. I argue that for nearly two centuries these financiers were part of an elite group that featured prominently in founding many of the largest Buddhist religious sites in ancient north central India. Their story starts in the 2nd century BCE and continues until the dawn of the Common Era. Their success in rooting Buddhism and assisting the establishment of a well-defined patronage network culminated with their greatest achievement: permanent reliquary enshrinement in Sanchi *stūpa* 2. At least one member of the prominent Gotiputa group operating in and around Sanchi before SG1 (1st century BCE) was venerated as a pioneering luminary who deserved veneration alongside famous monks and even the Buddha himself. The exact sites that the Gotiputa helped to bankroll came to house some of their remains for worship as reliquary inscriptions found at Sanchi's satellite sites.

I view Gotiputa—and his kin—as representative religious elites who are at the forefront of maintaining institutional order and legitimacy with their charisma.[479] As I will discuss in the final section of this chapter, I call these kinds of religious elites "charismatic entrepreneurs" because it is their innovative, entrepreneurial spirit which may have assisted in propelling a place like Sanchi to monumental status. I will trace some evidence below that suggests religious elites like the Gotiputas took an active role in patronage strategies.

I identify this lineage with the epigraphic use of a simple metronymic in Prakrit: *gotiputa*. Literally meaning "[A] son of Goti," their status in society may have eventually come to full fruition during the Gupta period of classical Indian history; however, it is unclear as to whether any members of the Gupta dynasty were descendants of a woman named "Goti" or, in Sanskrit, "Gaupti."[480] Here I am inquiring into the Gotiputa's

[479] I consider elites in the same way archaeologists consider elite members of ancient societies. Elites are usually central to providing order because "they occupied a point of articulation between society, the gods, and the privileged dead." See Mary Van Buren, and Janet Richards. "Ideology, Wealth, and the Comparative Study of 'Civilisations'." In *Order, Legitimacy, and Wealth in Ancient States*, edited by Janet Richards and Mary Van Buren, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p.4.

[480] *Gaupti* has long been the accepted Sanskrit form of the Prakrit 'Goti' since as far back as Lüders' classic "A List of Brāhmī Inscriptions." Marshall, Majumdar, and Foucher provided Sanskrit equivalents for many inscriptions listed in the first volume of *The Monuments of Sāñchī*. Vol. 1. There they even suggest the deviant form found from Andher, another *stūpa* site nearby Sanchi, Gota was "probably a shorter form of Gotiputa" (p. 291). Cunningham did not derive Gaupti but his agenda was always to connect a singular man called Gotiputa to the Sri Lankan chronicles, see Cunningham, *The Bhilsa Topes,* p. 122. It may be possible that Gotiputa is altogether incorrect and that the intended name is Koti-* or Kotī-putra instead. Kotīputa is an attested inscriptional metronymic and appears during the same time period near Sanchi. At Sonari, a smaller satellite sister-site to Sanchi, inscription 5 in Tsukamoto reads 1 sapurisasa kotīputasa kāsapagotasa sava-hemavat'ācariyasa [//*] (="[The relics] of Kāsapagota, who is a Kotīputa, a *sapurisa*, and a teacher to all of the Hemavatas."). However, the probable Sanskrit derivation from Kotīputa- is Kauntīputra-, which would completely change the metronymic. Given the prevalence of the form Gotiputa throughout Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, it is very likely that this is the intended form and not Kotīputa, since a common trait of northwestern Prakrits is to change the *ga*- consonants with *ka*-. Moreover, although not discussed at length in this dissertation, Sonari inscription 5 could likely be a mistake for Gotiputa instead of the other way around. Kotīputa is not an attested metronymic at Buddhist sites as far as I can tell except for at Sonari. As for the Sanskrit derivation of Gotiputa—I am not inclined to

relationship with Mainstream Buddhism and investigating their potential participation in elevating a young Buddhist institution to new heights in the wake of Aśoka. I intend to show that the Gotiputas were representative key players in the burgeoning religious movement we now call Buddhism.

I previously made use of the hundreds of donative inscriptions discussed at length in Chapter 3 to analyze how micro-transactions reflect an institution's macro-level approach to sustained financial support. In this chapter, I argue that central to the macro-level Buddhist economy were the local luminaries who firmly planted Buddhism in the region. I review the inscriptions relating to this family to form a history of their group, flesh out their context within the known styles of Buddhist patronage during the Early Historic Period, examine the place of wealthy elites like the Gotiputas between SG1 and SG2, and then explore one non-dedicatory inscription which hints at how Sanchi viewed its prominent luminaries, some of which included the Gotiputas within their ranks.

I conclude the chapter with a discussion of charisma known in sociology. Charisma lies at the heart of the Gotiputa's character as leaders and financiers of Sanchi and related pilgrimage sites. With their charismatic legacy insured via enshrinement at *stūpa* 2, I will discuss some processes that may have been at play at the top levels of the monastic Buddhist organization at Sanchi since the major religious actors that we know about—namely the Gotiputa who was enshrined—may have exhibited many Weberian charismatic traits.

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disagree with Lüders, Majumdar, or others who have taken it as Gaupti. However, if there exists a better

4.2 AN EPIGRAPHIC HISTORY

The Gotiputa metronymic is simply the identifying marker for this wealthy and powerful family, some of whom were monks and some of whom were not monks. These "sons of Goti" were possibly linked together because their mothers traced their descent from a distant male ancestor named Gupta. Evidence for such metronymics is abundant throughout a variety of Indian sources ranging from epigraphy to literature. Sircar succinctly defined these particular kinds of metronymics as referring to the absence of the *gotrāntara*, which was "the change of the bride's paternal *gotra* to that of her husband at the time of marriage."[481] Further, such designations utilizing *-*puta* (*-*putra* in Sanskrit) were later adopted by members of a royal family for dynastic usage.[482] In fact, the use of such metronyms was so prominent that in Tsukamoto's epigraphic collection of South Asian Buddhist epigraphy there are *at least* 247 usages spanning dozens if not more separate familial lineages. The practice of applying such designations may create some confusion about the ancestral lineage since there is a "built-in ambiguity in Indo-Aryan kinship: the wife assumes the clan and lineage of her husband upon marriage in theory, but in fact she never fully relinquishes her affiliation to her natal clan and lineage."[483] Metronymics of this sort are found throughout Buddhist and brāhmaṇical literature.[484]

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variation, I am open to the possibility.

[481] Dineschandra Sircar. *Indian Epigraphical Glossary,* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publ., 1966, p. 113.

[482] Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, p. 126.

[483] Thomas R Trautmann. "Licchavi-Dauhitra." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland* (New Series) 104, no. 1 (1972): p. 2. For a description of *gotra*-s in classical India, we may use a frequent citation from Kane: "Connection of *gotra* and *pravara* may be stated thus: *Gotra* is the latest ancestor or one of the latest ancestors of a person by whose name his family has been known for generations; while *pravara* is constituted by the sages or in some cases the remote ancestor" in *History of Dharmaśāstra*. Vol. 2.1, Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1941, p. 497.

[484] See Visvanathan, "Before Genealogy?" pp. 245–65 for a lengthy discussion of marking descent in Early Historic Period inscriptions. One should also see D.D. Kosambi's discussion using both Buddhist and

I identified sixteen Gotiputa references at seven different sites over about two centuries. The sites are clustered in north central India except for one donative inscription from the rock-cut cave of Karle in modern day Maharashtra. The main sites are Mathura, Bharhut, and Sanchi. We may significantly add to the list the satellite sites around Sanchi, namely Andher and Sonari. Near Bharhut we can add Kosambi. The Gotiputas appear to have had a stake in *stūpa* sites, whether they were Jaina or Buddhist.

Previous scholarship identified the Prakritic Gotiputa as a personal name referring to a luminary at Sanchi.[485] According to M.D. Willis, this Gotiputa was a prominent monastic teacher who had many disciples and even brothers who were active in the Sanchi area, probably in the 2nd century BCE. However, one of the limitations of this previous work was that it did not consider all the epigraphic occurrences found throughout ancient India. While Willis and Schopen[486] are both correct in that there was a very successful luminary in the Sanchi vicinity—we may even go as far as to call him the 'Light of Sanchi' as per his recurring epithet—it is extremely likely when considering *all the evidence* that Gotiputa is not a singular personal name but rather a family name referring to a group of individuals who were religious patrons and actors for several hundred years.

The Gotiputas found at Sanchi are quite likely different from the Gotiputas found at Bharhut and Mathura because of several factors. The first is that the sites do not all

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brāhmaṇical literature "On the Origin of Brahmin Gotras." *The Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 26 (1950): 21–80.

[485] For instance, see Willis, "Buddhist Saints in Ancient Vedisa."

[486] Gregory Schopen. "An Old Inscription From Amaravatī and the Cult of the Local Monastic Dead in Indian Buddhist Monasteries." *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 14, no. 2 (1991): 281–330.

date to the same generation or period. Secondly, descriptions of the Gotiputas are quite different and obviously refer to separate individuals who had different traits and trades. Lastly, the luminary or luminaries enshrined at Sanchi had deeper monastic Buddhist connections than any other Gotiputas at any other site.

The Mathura Gotiputas - A Jaina and a Goldsmith

To recount all the Gotiputas that are known from epigraphy during the Early Historic Period we must begin with the earliest records. At Mathura during the 2nd century BCE we find one *āyāgapaṭa*[487] tablet ('devotional plaque') and one coping-stone containing donative inscriptions referencing Gotiputas. The inscription reads:

Mathura Āyāgapaṭa 1[488]
(2nd century BCE)

1 namo arahato vardhamānasya gotiputrasa poṭhayaśa[kasa?]… kālavāḷasa
2 … kośikiye śimitrāye āyāgapaṭo pra[t]i(thāpito)

"Adoration to the arhat Vadhamāna! An *āyāgapaṭa* was set up by Śimitrā, of the Kośiki [family], (wife of?) the kālavāḷa, Poṭhayaśa(ka), and Gotiputa."

Most interesting and obvious here is that this site is Jaina and not Buddhist, meaning that the patrons of the *āyāgapaṭa* and the coping-stone around a *stūpa* were knowingly contributing financially to the Jaina sect. The *āyāgapaṭa* inscription describes a donor named Śimitrā, the wife of a Gotiputa probably named or called Poṭayaśa(ka) whose occupation is *kālavāḷa*. The word 'kālavāḷa' has proven difficult to translate, but I am in agreement with Quintanilla[489] who follows Lüders in that it probably refers to an official

[487] For an exhaustive description of *āyāgapaṭa*-s, see Sonya Rhie Quintanilla. "Āyāgapaṭas: Characteristics, Symbolism, and Chronology." *Artibus Asiae* 60 (2000): 79–137. The same cause is once again taken up in her book, *History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura*.
[488] For this inscription, since I have not personally inspected the inscription, I follow Quintanilla in edition and translation. *History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura*, p. 268.
[489] Quintanilla, *History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura*, p. 268.

within the local government. The Gotiputa *āyāgapaṭa* dates to 150 BCE according to Quintanilla and others.

The second Mathura inscription is a coping-stone. It describes a Gotiputa named Ūtara who is a *sova[ṇ](ikasa)*, or 'goldsmith.' The inscription is simply:

Mathura Inscription 168[490]
(1st century BCE?)

1 gotiputrasa ūtarasa sova[ṇ](ikasa)

"(A gift) of Ūtara, a goldsmith and Gotiputa."

Dating to approximately the early 1st century BCE, we may look to the Arthaśāstra (ĀŚ) for a description of 'goldsmiths' and locate their role and importance in society. In his recent translation and analysis of the ĀŚ, Patrick Olivelle observes that gold, 'suvarṇa,' was a particular weight and not a coin, since fines were paid in *paṇa*-s, or silver coins.[491] The only coins produced, called *hiraṇya* in the ĀŚ, were only made of silver and copper.[492] Nevertheless, several chapters are dedicated to those called goldsmiths, as in our inscription (2.12.-14). The description of a "chief goldsmith" (Skt. *sauvarṇika*) in 2.13.2 seemingly aligns with our Goti group as found in the Mathura coping-stone

[490] The number refers to the edition from Heinrich Lüders. *Mathura Inscriptions*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961. Its facsimile is on p. 316. Strangely, Ūtara's inscription is not listed in Tsukamoto. I do not disagree with Lüders' reading. However, the reconstructed *sovaṇikasa* is hypothetical—but was Lüders best guess. There is another inscription from Mathura which uses the same word (no. 150 in the same list), but is significantly later, probably 3rd century CE. In no other location have I found the Prakritic *sovaṇika* appear in Buddhist inscriptions. Nonetheless, it does appear several times in later inscriptions, particularly from the Western Deccan caves (at Nasik, Tsuk. ins. no. 10.3; at Kanheri no. 80.1), and at Patna in the 11th century CE (Kurkihar ins. no. 49.2). We may confirm the translation as 'goldsmith' using secondary sources, such as the ĀŚ, and in non-Buddhist inscriptions, as Sircar is able to do, see *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, p. 307.

[491] Olivelle says that "The indigenous production of gold coins was introduced into India by the Kushana ruler Vima Kadphises, whose rule extended from the end of the first to the beginning of the second century C.E" in *King, Governance, and Law in Ancient India: Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra*, p. 27. Olivelle uses gold as a means to postulate a *terminus ante quem* for the composition of some of Kauṭilya's sources.

[492] Olivelle*, King, Governance, and Law in Ancient India*, p. 27.

inscription. The ĀŚ states that, "In the middle of the market street, [the Superintendent of Gold] should install the Chief Goldsmith, who should be an expert craftsman, of noble birth, and trustworthy."[493] Chief Goldsmiths are tasked with "arranging for gold and silver work of people of the city and the countryside to be carried out by workshop owners" (2.14.1).[494] Unfortunately, a survey of *suvaṇṇa* in Pāli literature does not yield any further insight into the role and status of a goldsmith in society, although the term is used many times in metaphors since the process of purifying a substance such as gold, as a goldsmith does when he works with the gold, can easily be equated to purifying the mind.

The Bharhut Gotiputa - Local Ruler

The next Gotiputa chronologically may be found at Bharhut in the famous gateway inscription that could be one of our only extant references to the Śuṅgan dynasty. The inscription records that one Dhanabhūti, grandson of a king (*rājā*) and a Gotiputa, made the great gateway. That inscription reads:

Bharhut Inscription 1[495]
(Late 2nd century BCE / early 1st century BCE)

1 Suganam raje raño Gāgīputasa Visadevasa
2 pauteṇa+ Gotiputasa āgarajusa puteṇa
3 Vāchiputena Dhanabhūtina kāritaṃ toranāṃ
4 silākaṃmaṃto ca upaṃno [/]

"The construction of a gateway and stone-work was caused to be done by Vāchiputa Dhanabhūti, the son of Āgaraju Gotiputa, the grandson of *rāja* Visadeva Gāgīputa, during the reign of the Sugas."

[493] Olivelle, *King, Governance, and Law in Ancient India,* p. 130.
[494] Olivelle, *King, Governance, and Law in Ancient India,* p. 133.
[495] This refers to Tsukamoto Bharhut inscription no. 1.

Although subject to some debate because of its possible reference (and ability to potentially date the Śuṅgas), the context of the Gotiputa is fairly straightforward. A genealogical list of men, of which a Gotiputa was one, includes a *rāja*, which may refer to a local ruler or an imperial ruler (as the Śuṅga dynasty would be). Regardless, the family here is well-connected and amongst the rich and powerful regionally, at the very least.

The Kosambi Gotiputa - The Caravan Leader

From nearby at Kosambi the Maṇibhadra stone inscription records the erection of a *vedikā* ('railing') by a Gotiputa who is described as both a *gahapati*[496] ('householder') and as a *sathavāha* ('caravan leader'). Although studied briefly in Chapter 3, it is presented again here because of its importance to the Gotiputas:

The Maṇibhadra Stone Inscription[497]
(1st century BCE?)

1 namo bhagavate
2 sathavāhasa
3 mānibhadasa
4 gahapatikasa
5a ejāvatiputasa
5b vārisa[498]
6 puto gahapatiko
7 seliyāputo
8 kusapālo nāmā

[496] One scholar (Wagle 1966: p. 152) uses the term to refer to a person whose wealth and influence is growing and separates them from their kin. More recently, '*gahapati*-s' have been described as the "village and country elite" (Bailey and Mabbette p. 51). Rather than being generic members of the Buddhist community, those who are given the title of 'gahapati' seem to be special, mostly in terms of their wealth and giving power. Nearly all householders in Pali literature are also known for their affluence. One noteworthy example of a gahapati's role in supporting the Buddhist monastic brotherhood comes from the Vinaya's story of Meṇḍaka and his family (Vin. I, pp. 240-44). His enormous amount of wealth, partially earned through his use of psychic powers, allows him to graciously pay the king's army's wages and gift 1,250 cowherds to serve the Buddhist *saṁgha*.

[497] Edition comes from Harry Falk. "The Tidal Waves of Indian History," p. 150. However, the translation is my own based on Falk's for the sake of readability.

[498] According to Quintanilla, *History of Early Stone Sculpture at Mathura* p. 257, *vārisa* was inserted in small characters between lines 5 and 6. Since this stone has been lost, we only have old reports to go by.

9 tasa putena
10 gahapatikena
11 gotiputena
12 aśikāyaṁ kāritā
13 vedikā piyataṁ
14 [bhagavā]

"Adoration to the Bhagavata! A railing was caused to be made at Aśika by a Gotiputa, a householder, who was the son of one named Kusapāla, a householder who was the son of Seliyā and Vāri, the son of Ejāvati, a follower of Maṇibhada and a caravan leader."

Relatively recent scholarship has explored *gahapati*-s in quite some depth. The conclusion is that *gahapati*-s were very likely a wealthy land-owning group who invested considerable resources into commercial endeavors.[499] *Gahapati*-s also likely held many political and social responsibilities that led to their esteemed place in high culture during the Early Historic Period.[500] Additionally, we now have the earliest recorded historical connection between the Gotiputas and the Buddhist institution. The connection was not a monastic one but rather one of patronage and influence. Bharhut may originally have been an Aśokan monument but during the late 2nd century or early 1st century it was a monument funded by a member of the high-ranking Gotiputa family whose name was inscribed on the highest portion of the monumental stone gateway, a location of prestige and physical prominence fit for a record worthy of its powerful donor.

The other descriptor attributed to the Maṇibhadra Gotiputa is *sathavāha*, or 'caravan leader.' We may briefly turn to several textual passages from various locations to ascertain the context in which a 'caravan leader' may have been interested in financially supporting a religious institution. The Jaina *Bṛhatkalpa Bhāsya* (I, 2066) lists four types of people associated with caravans, two of which were people who carried goods by cart

[499] For literary references and contextual discussion, see Ray, *Monastery and Guild*.
[500] See Chakravarti, *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism*, pp. 65-93.

and those who were wanderers subsisting on the generosity of people. As the Buddhist Pāli Vinaya (Vin III 46) describes, these were merchants (including caravan leaders) and religious mendicants. These caravans are described in the Dīgha Nikāya (DN II 344) as extremely large and venturing from city to city.[501] The Buddha himself permits monks to travel with caravans, even during the rainy season when they are supposed to remain in a single place (Vin I 151-2).[502] It seems as if the Gotiputas, or at least one or more of them, potentially came to be associated with monastic Buddhists on the road, traveling from city to city, as both were soliciting the same bodies of people. It is not unlikely that one or some Gotiputa caravan leader interacted with traveling monastic Buddhists. One potential result of such a relationship may have manifested in mutually beneficial partnership in which both parties benefitted.

Some ancient Indian texts, like the *Śāntiparvan* (Chapters 56, 87, 89)[503] of the Mahābhārata, describe how the king had his hand in in all affairs of the state, especially commerce and transaction. This form of state control required the king to not only guard his money and investments carefully, but also to be consistently responsible for the welfare of his people.[504] In the Mānava-Dharmaśāstra, the king taxes nearly all facets of commerce, namely transactions, road upkeep (9.282), food, and the procurement of tradable goods (7.127). Manu also discusses how the king takes ownership of all things

[501] Elsewhere, in the Vinaya (IV 63), a road devoted to only caravans is mentioned.
[502] The same law code does not pass over the fact that these very same caravans must always pay taxes to the king's men (Vin IV, 131-132). Lastly, a caravan of merchants who camps in one place for four months or more is called a *gāma* (Vin II 46 200), or a 'village,' indicating that mercantile itinerancy was a fluid concept where those in the caravan may shift legally between travelers and "village dwellers" within a short timespan.
[503] Haripada Chakraborti. *Trade and Commerce of Ancient India*, C. 200 B.C. - C. 650 A.D., Calcutta: Academic Publishers, 1966, p. 287.

dug up from mines and quarries (8.39). One of the major exports of Sanchi was fine stone dug up from the Nagauri hill next to the monastic center, the very same stone largely used in its construction.[505] Interestingly, such a kingly heavy hand is decidedly absent at Sanchi nearly entirely after Aśoka, since there are no known outright royal donors or messages from royals.[506] Sanchi's quarry seems to be private and outside the realm of the king's influence since it resides on a small hill immediately adjacent to the *stūpa* hilltop.[507]

According to Kauṭilya, kings should deliberately attempt to facilitate commerce by connecting commercial nodes (2.1.19). In fact, he is specific that commodities should always be moved, as he cites a rule that strictly forbids the sale of commodities "at the place of production" (2.22.9).[508] Throughout the ĀŚ, the modes of production are centralized at the state level, again referencing a heavy-hand of the king, which is nearly entirely absent from the early Buddhist cult-sites that were centers for a plethora of

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[504] Chakraborti, *Trade and Commerce of Ancient India.* p. 286.
[505] Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India,* p. 42; p. 86.
[506] There are several possible references to royals but none of them are direct. The best one comes from *stūpa* 1's *vedikā*: Tsuk. 368 / MM 364 of SG2 which refers to a female donor Vākalā who is called devī, which may be a reference to a local 'queen.' She donated a rail-pillar but did not list a village in which she resided, indicating that she was probably a local. Additionally, also from *stūpa* 1's *vedikā* are two inscriptions by Subāhita, who is called a Gotiputa and a *rāja-lipikara*: Tsuk. 157 / MM 171 and Tsuk. 161 / MM 175. However, despite being a Gotiputa, he is only a scribe presumably for royals and not one of them himself. Last but not least is the donor Ānaṁda from the 1st century CE. He gifted the top architrave of the south gateway at *stūpa* no. 1. His inscription describes him as a *āvesanisa* ('foreman of the artisans') for *rāño* ('king') Siri-Sātakaṇi Vāsiṭhiputra: Tsuk. 384 / MM 398.
[507] Nagauri hill just c. 350m south of Sanchi was lightly inhabited for many centuries by individuals living in rock-shelters. A larger painting found in one of the shelters seems to have indicated usage by a Buddhist, or at least by an artist who was familiar with early Buddhist artistic styles, see *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India,* pp. 110-111. A 2nd or early 1st century BCE dam designed for downstream irrigation coincides with the major Sanchi site renovations of the era, such as the construction of the *stūpa* 1 *vedikā*, the *stūpa*'s enlargement, and possibly also even the construction of *stūpa* no. 2's *vedikā,* see Shaw, *Buddhist Landscapes in Central India,* p. 233. Nagauri seems to have been privately used and quarried by the prominent local monastic order.

economic activity.[509] The same text is also specific about taxes on ivory and wool, two major exports of Vidisha. It is very likely that taxes and tolls were paid in cash by the traveling merchants, like caravan leaders.[510] How might the absence of the king's heavy hand as a patron at cultic religious sites like Sanchi be reconciled given the accurate descriptions in the very same texts of the economic state of affairs? On one hand, the king centralizes the modes of production in order to facilitate trade of which he taxes and profits. On the other hand, there seems to be little or no investment into cult religious sites during the Early Historic period. The conscious absence of the king at these sites directly contrasts the conscious presence of merchants and other wealthy travelers who were heavy donors to the monastic communities, although it is certainly possible that at the macro-level the *saṁgha* owed the local rulers taxes on their construction activities.

Many of the same legal texts cited instances of tax exemption. Notably, from the ĀŚ, foreigners were exempted from taxes for the purpose of increasing mutual commerce between local and foreign cities (2.16.11-13). Tolls along roads also were permitted to let certain commodities proceed untaxed, like those meant for marriage, religious ceremonies, articles meant for gifting, or any other sort of religious observance (2.21.18-19). Kautilya claims that there is no motive for profit in taxing such commodities. In the

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[508] Olivelle does not know the exact reason for the provision (p. 557) but cites Breloer who suggests that a centralized polity, perhaps the state, was interested in an even market distribution for the sake of tax collection. See Breloer, Berhnhardt. *Kauṭilya-Studien*, Vol. 3. Bonn/Leipzig: Schroeder, 1927: pp. 453-454.
[509] Here I am following Chakraborti, *Trade and Commerce of Ancient India*, p. 291. I would add that even Buddhist sites with donations from royal patrons, especially those from the Western Deccan during the Sātavāhana dynasty, do not often reflect unique architectural features ordered by the kingly patron. Instead, the caves and open-air sites tend to follow well-established patterns found at a multiplicity of sites. The regularity with which features are constructed shows remarkable uniformity in construction pattern, indicating a highly privatized and well-regulated layout.
[510] Chakraborti*, Trade and Commerce of Ancient India,* p. 290.

famous Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela from the 2nd century BCE, Śrotriya *brāhmaṇa*-s are given exemption from taxation.[511]

At Sanchi, both categories, namely those traveling along roads with religious instruments and items intended to be used as gifts and religious persons, subject to tax remission in these texts were present and appear within the same epigraphic corpus.

Buddhist religious literature also cites legal monastic exceptions where traveling and commerce are concerned, showing a leniency to the normative rules for long journeys. Vedisa, just 9km outside of Sanchi, and was the closest and largest urban center than most of the traveling monks, nuns, merchants, and others would travel through. The city was known for its wool as an export. The Buddha lays out an interesting rule concerning wool in the Pāṭimokkha. The Buddha allows monks to receive and carry wool on a journey if there are no porters (Nissaggiya Pācittiya 16, Vin III 234):

> Sheep's wool may accrue to a monk as he is going along a road. It may be accepted by that monk, if he likes; but having accepted it, it should be conveyed in his (own) hands for three *yojana*s at the utmost, if there are no carriers. If he should convey it further it than that, even if there are no carriers, there is an offence of expiation involving forfeiture.[512]

Therefore, the monk who is carrying a load of gifted wool may have around 27 modern miles to locate help in getting the load back to his monastery.[513] The Buddha also describes several other important instances when monks, while traveling long distances,

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[511] The text is: L9 *agiṇathiyā sava-gahanaṁ ca kārayituṁ bāmhaṇānaṁ jātim parihāraṁ dadāti*[.*]. I tentatively translate this section as: "And to make all these [previously mentioned gifts] acceptable, [the King] gives, during a fire sacrifice, exemption to the *brāhmaṇa* caste." The word *agiṇathiyā* is problematic, but I am more or less following K P Jayaswal, and R D Banerji. "The Hathigumpha Inscription of Kharavela." *Epigraphia Indica* 20 (1929): 71–89. The same reference can be found in *Trade and Commerce of Ancient India,* p. 300.

[512] Translation is from SuttaCentral.net's compilation and modern re-presentation of Horner: Horner, Isaline Blew, and Bhikkhu Brahmali. *The Book of the Discipline*, SuttaCentral, 2014, p. 528.

[513] I take a *yojana* as approximately 9 miles as it is measured and listed by Arthur Llewellyn Basham. *The Wonder That Was India*, New York: Grove, 1959, p. 503.

are afforded other exceptions to monastic law. In Pācittiya 27, monks are also permitted to travel with nuns under specific circumstances, such as when the road is dangerous and requires a weapon (Vin IV 64). Yet another ruling (Pācittiya 57) allows monks to not bathe for more than 2 weeks at a time if they are on a long journey (Vin IV 119).

Many more exceptions afforded to journeying monastics are found outside the Bhikkhu Pāṭimokkha. For example, in the Mahāvagga's *Bhesajjakkhandhaka* section there is a lengthy exception enabling traveling monks and nuns to carry the five products of the cow as well as provide themselves with the necessary supplies required for the journey, whether that is rice, beans, salt, molasses, or oil (Vin I 245). This comes within the context of traveling through rough terrain, like deserts, where alms support might be extremely scarce. In short, all these exceptions from normative monastic law display how the monastic community was quite lenient within the context of journeying, especially with regard to mercantile caravans and common goods required for subsistence. At Sanchi, since all these exceptional groups appear together, often with their donative record side by side, it is likely that these groups traveled together, shared information, and became friends, which in turn could have led to donations to the *saṁgha*.

The Sanchi Gotiputas

The next group of references comes from the Sanchi region and spans the full breadth of the eras investigated in this dissertation. At least[514] one Gotiputa here, predating my donor generations, was enshrined in *stūpa* 2 as a monastic luminary while others, dating

[514] Although it seems unlikely, I must mention that the evidence presented below could potentially be for multiple men with the same metronymic. However, none of the previous scholars have taken them to be different given the context. I agree on this point, although the proposition that all of the Gotiputas throughout the ancient subcontinent are of mostly different people and that Gotiputa is merely just a descriptor is uniquely my argument alone.

to my SG2, were prominent members of the local monastic and non-monastic communities. Each of the inscriptions containing a reference to a Gotiputa provides more resources for the study of this group. Below I will analyze their titles and epithets, their social associations, and their professions.

Quite famously, the relics of ten individuals were enshrined in Sanchi *stūpa* 2, located just down the hill from the central *stūpa* 1, which likely once housed the relics of the Buddha himself. On the side of the rectangular stone relic box (*dhātukaraṇḍaka*) found inside *stūpa* 2 was a three-lined inscription:

Sanchi Stūpa 2 Dhātukaraṇḍaka
(Late 2nd century BCE / Early 1st century CE)[515]

1 savina vināyakāna araṁ kāsapa
2 gotaṁ upādaya araṁ ca vāchi
3 suvijayitaṁ vināyakaṁ

"[Relics] of all leaders including venerable Kāsapagota and venerable Vāchi Suvijayita the leader."

One flattened reliquary found from inside the stone relic box contained the relics of Sanchi's most famous Gotiputa:

Sanchi Stūpa 2 Gotiputa Dhātupātra
(Late 2nd c. BCE / Early 1st c. CE)[516]

(Outside lid) sapurisasa[517] kosīkiputasa
(Inside lid) sapurisasa gotiputasa
(Bottom) sapurisasa mogaliputasa

[515] I use the latest edition, edited by Willis, *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India*, p. 70. For the sake of continuity, I also use Willis' translation. He made original readings to confirm what Cunningham and Maisey found in the 19th century. Willis' catalogue at the end of the book is a tidy presentation of all the known reliquaries in the area. In Willis' book, Fig. 52 shows the box with its inscription. In MM, the inscription is no. 2. Tsukamoto does not contain the reliquary inscriptions.
[516] With one exception (see below), I follow Willis' edition. In MM it is nos. 10-12.
[517] Willis' edition records: *sapurisasi(sa)*. I follow Marshall and Majumdar's old edition (MM 10) which reads only 'sapurisasa'. It is likely a typographical error in Willis' book. If not, the intended word is clear since it matches all the other similar inscriptions.

"[Relics] of a Kosīkiputa *sapurisa*. [Relics] of a Gotiputa *sapurisa*. [Relics] of a Mogaliputa *sapurisa*."

This Gotiputa is the central Gotiputa to the history of Buddhism at Sanchi. He bears the title of *sapurisa*, which is known from Pāli literature as a 'virtuous person,' and is often translated by epigraphers as simply 'saint' as Majumdar[518] did long ago, or as 'worthy,' as Willis[519] has recently done. Via association with the Gotiputas enshrined in and around Sanchi, Schopen[520] and Willis have implied that *sapurisa* is a monastic title. However, while the Pāli dictionary does equate it to *ariya*, or 'noble one,' Edgerton once wrote, "[a]ccording to Professor Paul Mus… [the *sapurisa*-s] are a kind of lay equivalent of the Bodhisattvas, who live the life of *gṛhapatis*…".[521] Throughout the Pāli Canon, the title of *sappurisa* (Pkt. *sapurisa*; Skt. *satpuruṣa*) is given to virtuous individuals who encapsulate a number of high character ideals, which are not just monastic virtues.

A number of *sutta*-s hold the honor of being titled *Sappurisa-sutta*. The first one[522] from the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* describes a *sappurisa* as one who speaks truthfully, does not discredit himself, and speaks about his qualities confidently.

Another *sutta*[523] teaches that a *sappurisa* nurtures those around him by bringing welfare and happiness to them. The benefactors of a *sappurisa*'s birth are parents, wives and children, workers and servants, friends and companions, departed ancestors, kings,

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[518] See any of the translations in of the reliquaries Marshall, *The Monuments of Sāñcī.* Vol. 1, p. 295 and throughout.
[519] Willis*, Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India*, p. 74 and throughout.
[520] Schopen, "An Old Inscription From Amaravatī and the Cult of the Local Monastic Dead in Indian Buddhist Monasteries."
[521] Here I follow Schopen's opinion of the term and his reference to Edgerton. See Schopen, "An Old Inscription From Amaravatī and the Cult of the Local Monastic Dead in Indian Buddhist Monasteries", p. 309. For the definition, see Franklin Edgerton. *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1993, p. 554.
[522] A II 77.

deities, and, last but certainly not least, ascetics and *brāhmaṇa*-s. In this *sutta*, the *sappurisa* is compared metaphorically to a marvelous rain cloud that nurtures crops by sprinkling down rain during a drought. The metaphor refers to the generosity of a *sappurisa* and does not necessarily reference his wealth, if any.

A third *sutta*,[524] from the *Majjhima Nikāya*, does reveal a *sappurisa* who is a monk. He does not chastise others based on their background (such as birth, wealth, etc.) nor is he burdened by the spiritual progress of others. On the other hand, *asappurisa*-s, 'unworthy men,' engage in these activities and pursue their own gratification.

A very short *sutta* entitled *Sappurisadāna-sutta*,[525] from the *Aṅguttara,* lists the eight gifts from a *sappurisa*: 1.) that which is pure; 2.) that which is excellent; 3.) that which is timely; 4.) that which is allowable; 5.) that which is thoughtful; 6.) that which is often; 7.) that which settles his mind; and 8.) that which leads to elation.

A longer *sutta*, also called *Sappurisadāna-sutta*,[526] from the *Aṅguttara*, lists yet more types of gifts: 1.) those that are with conviction; 2.) those that are attentive; 3.) those that are in season; 4.) those that are with an unrestrained heart; and 5.) those that do not afflict others.

Other *sutta*-s also provide insight, such as those aptly titled *Asappurisa-sutta*. From the Buddha's description of the *asappurisa* we can infer the qualities of the *sappurisa*. Variously, the *asappurisa*'s tend to possess the wrong aims and wrong views

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[523] A IV 244.
[524] M III 37.
[525] A IV 243.
[526] A III 172.

towards themselves, others, and society.[527] Elsewhere they are described as possessing wrong, inferior knowledge about the true nature of reality.[528]

Given these qualities, none of which are very surprising, we may tentatively summarize the *sappurisa* depicted in the Pāli canon as an individual worthy of high respect. However, it should be pointed out that none of these attributes are very unique and therefore the definition of who should be able to earn the title of *sappurisa* is quite fluid. Further, many of these traits are subjective and may be variously applied. The definition is quite less defined than a common translation of the term in English, 'saint.' For Catholics, for instance, a saint is someone who has been canonized officially by the Church by the Pope himself. Saints in that tradition must be proven to have performed at least two miracles and thus by definition the title is not fluid. Instead, it is formal. *Sappurisa* seemingly is not.[529]

The one major recurring trait throughout the texts is that they are esteemed gift givers. Last but not least the metaphorical *sappurisa* is compared to a nurturing rain cloud upon which many others, probably the gift receivers, rely. In the end, I posit that the *sappurisa* may or not necessarily be a monk. Translating all inscriptional references to *sapurisa*-s as monastics could be a mistake, especially since through all the Pāli references I can find in only one *sutta* is the *sappurisa* as a monk.

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[527] S V 19.
[528] S V 20.
[529] Like the informal, colloquial usage of the word 'saint' in English to casually or even sarcastically describe a person, it is possible that there may be a cognate in the Indic languages.

A second reliquary[530] from Sanchi *stūpa* 2 refers to the metronymic Gotiputa again, probably referencing the same person:

Sanchi Stūpa 2 Vāchiya Suvijayita Dhātupātra
(Late 2nd c. BCE / Early 1st c. CE)

(Outer circle) sapurisasa vāchiya suvijayitasa goti[*puta] atevāsino
(Inner circle) kākanavapabhāsa sihanā dāna

"[Relics] of Vāchiya Suvijayita, who is a *sapurisa* and a monastic pupil to the Gotiputa. [The reliquary] is a gift of the pupils of the 'Light of Kākanava.'"

The enshrined Gotiputa is given the epithet *kākanava-pabhāsana*, which has been adequately rendered 'the light of Sanchi[531]' since we know from other inscriptions that Kākanava is the ancient name for Sanchi itself.[532] Majumdar never questioned that the epithet referred directly to the referenced Gotiputa, assuming that Gotiputa referred to a personal name of a single man. I agree with Majumdar's connection as it makes the most linguistic sense when reading the inscription from the outer circle to the inner circle. Hypothetically, we may take these as two lines appearing in sequence. We know from the hundreds of other donative inscriptions appearing at Sanchi and elsewhere that most of the time a donative record will end with dānaṁ, thus supporting the notion that the inner circle should be read second. Unfortunately, the *brāhmī* for the word 'gotiputa' is damaged. From the contents of a reliquary inscription from Andher, a nearby *stūpa* site, we may confirm that the epithet refers to the Gotiputa and not Vāchiya Suvijayita:

[530] In addition to the stone relic box, there are four reliquaries. Only two are directly referenced in this section.
[531] The translation for this phrase has been known for more than a century. Willis reinforced it recently in *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India*, p. 72. For a brief discussion of its meaning, however, see Gregory Schopen. "An Old Inscription From Amaravatī and the Cult of the Local Monastic Dead in Indian Buddhist Monasteries," p. 298 and p. 311.
[532] See P H L Eggermont. "Sanchi-Kākanāda and the Hellenistic and Buddhist Sources." In *Deyadharma*, edited by G Bhattacharya, 11–27, Delhi, 1986.

Andher Stūpa 2 Dhātupātra 1
(1st century BCE)[533]

1 sapurisasa gotiputasa kākanava pabhāsanasa koḍiñagotasa

"[Relics] of the *sapurisa* Gotiputa who was the Light of Sanchi and a member of the Koḍiña[534] gotra."

In neither reliquary inscription, however, is there a reference to a Gotiputa being a monk, although it seems to be implied given the fact that Vāchiya Suvijayita is described as an *atevāsin* to Gotiputa. This Andher reliquary inscription is extremely important because it describes Gotiputa as a Koḍiñagota, indicating that he was a member of the brāhmaṇical Kauṇḍinya *gotra*, thus making him, by birth, a member of an already elite member of society. While none of the other inscriptions for any of the later Gotiputas found at Sanchi (who are discussed below), or even at Mathura or Bharhut, reference a *gotra*, it might be that they all were also members of the same brāhmaṇical *gotra*. Further, a separate non-Gotiputa reliquary found from Sonari *stūpa* 2 reads: sapurisasa majhimasa koḍinīputasa, or "[Relics] of the sapurisa Majhima, a Koḍinīputa." If this is the same *sapurisa* Mahima who is also enshrined alongside Gotiputa in Sanchi *stūpa* 2, we have an interesting case of two prominent local brāhmaṇical-identifying Buddhists whose relics were installed for worship inside a featured *stūpa*, thus raising the question as to just how many of these elites—or even just regular donors—were *brāhmaṇa*-s.[535]

[533] Edition from Willis, *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India,* p. 97.
[534] It is highly interesting that the inscription lists an actual brāhmaṇical *gotra* (Koḍiña = Skt. Kauṇḍinya). In essence, the *sapurisa* whose relics are enshrined in Andher *stūpa* 2 has two *gotra*-s. Further research should be done on this unique historical situation in the future.
[535] I thank Joel Brereton for helping me to understand the connection here.

Another Gotiputa reliquary was found at a nearby *stūpa* site called Sonari. This reliquary is made of thick burnished rock crystal (*sphaṭikapātra*) and contained a small inscribed stone tablet. Its inscription reads:

Sonari Stūpa 2 Sphaṭikapātra
(1st century BCE)[536]

(Side one)
1 sapurisasa goti
2 puga(ta)sa hemavata

(Side two)
3 Sa dudubhisa
4 radāyādasa

"[Relics] of a Gotiputa, who is a *sapurisa*, and spiritual heir of Dudubhisara, the Hemavata."

The new epithet, *Dudubhisara-dāyāda*, 'the spiritual heir to Dudubhisara,'[537] increases the likelihood that the prominent Gotiputa enshrined throughout the region was, at least at the time of his death, most likely a monk, given the alluded to position of spiritual inheritance. According to the Pāli Mahāvaṁsa, Dudubhisara was a monk who, after the Third Council, went to the Himalayas as a missionary. Two of his companions were Majhima and Kāsapagota, two other named *sapurisa*-s also enshrined in the Sanchi vicinity. Recently, Willis has successfully fleshed out the full context:

> The meaning of the word *dāyāda* in this context is provided by the Dpvs (7:17) and Thvs (p. 191), where Aśoka asks the Elders whether he is an heir (*dāyāda*) to the dispensation of the Buddha and, on discovering that he is not, takes the necessary steps to become one… Dudubhisara, like the other Hemavata missionaries, lived at the time of the Third Council in the mid-third century BC, while Gotiputa flourished sometime later, probably in the second century. The tablet inscription is therefore stating that Gotiputa belonged to Dudubhisara's line of teachers and was, as a consequence, his spiritual heir.[538]

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[536] The edition is from Willis, *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India,* p. 88.
[537] Cunningham originally translated it as "the brother of religion amongst the Dardabhisāras of the Hemavatas," in *The Bhilsa Topes*, p. 316. Lüders first connected Gotiputa to the phrase *Dudubhisara-dāyāda* and suggested the heir connotation in "A List of Brāhmī Inscriptions."
[538] Willis*, Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India,* p. 88.

From these reliquary inscriptions, we may conclude that there were one or more Gotiputas in the Sanchi region who were esteemed by their colleagues enough to enshrine them for worship in *stūpa*-s.

The one or more Gotiputas in the area left behind a legacy in the form of pupils who also had famous lives and were worthy of enshrinement. Andher, yet another satellite site to Sanchi, once housed numerous *stūpa*-s on its own hilltop, several of which yielded inscribed reliquaries. From Andher stūpa 2 is a course red earthenware dish and cover:

Andher Stūpa 2 Dhātupātra 2
(1st century BCE)[539]

1 ve(ā?)sino | sapurisasa vāchiputasa a[t*]i gotīputa[540]

"[Relics] of the *sapurisa* Vāchiputa, a pupil of the Gotiputa."

Still yet another from Andher reads:

Andher Stūpa 2 Dhātupātra 3
(1st century BCE)[541]

1 sapurisasa mogaliputasa gotiputa atevāsino

"[Relics] of the sapurisa Mogaliputa, a pupil of the Gotiputa."

Both inscriptions suggest that at least one Gotiputa from the era was a monastic teacher to not only other *sapurisa*-s but to *sapurisa*-s also worthy of enshrinement. In other words, we now have the beginnings of a classic lineage of powerful individuals whose

[539] Edition from Willis, *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India,* p. 96.
[540] According to Willis (p. 96), the inscription exhibits many strange characteristics and is difficult to read. At the beginning, the word *atevāsino* is apparently a later emendation since it was intended to be written after Vāchiputasa and before *Gotiputa*. Instead, it was only began—albeit incorrectly—as *ati*-… and completed at the front of the inscription. Further, the genitive ending for *Vāchiputasa* was added below the word after the original engraving. Last but not least the word 'gotiputa' does not contain a case ending. The additions could be explained as an added identification of Vāchiputa as a pupil of the Gotiputa.
[541] Edition from Willis, *Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India,* p. 98.

followers desired to venerate them for more than a century later. The *stūpa* cult in and around Sanchi may have been just as rooted in teacher-veneration as in veneration of the Buddha himself, of whom there are no known reliquaries attributed to in the region.

So far we have three explicit epithets for the enshrined Gotiputa: *sapurisa* ('good man'), *kākanava-pabhāsana* ('Light of Sanchi'), and *Dudubhisara-dāyāda* ('the spiritual heir to Dudubhisara'). From the large stone relic box from *stūpa* 2 at Sanchi we also have the implication that the same Gotiputa was most likely considered one of the *vināyaka*-s ('leader') as well. Further, it was also written that Vāchiya Suvijayita, a *sapurisa* himself and also a *vināyaka*, was a pupil (*atevāsino*) to a Gotiputa, as were Vāchiputa and Mogaliputa from Andher.

On the ground *vedikā* from *stūpa* 1 during the waning decades of the 1st century BCE (SG2) we find two more Gotiputas who are *not* the Gotiputa enshrined in *stūpa* 2. These two other individuals have been called "brothers" to that Gotiputa[542] but the records themselves just call them simply Gotiputas with an unknown kin relationship. Most likely they are kinsmen of the enshrined Gotiputa since we know his presence was stamped all around the vicinity. It is also possible that they are not related to the enshrined Gotiputa at all and are, rather, just claiming a connection the famous individual.[543] The first inscription reads:

[542] Willis*, Buddhist Reliquaries From Ancient India,* p. 73.

[543] I find this rather unlikely since these donative inscriptions were probably not "written" by the donor themselves and were instead written by a scribe who took his cue from an administrator who had determined what to write. Further, if there was an imitation game occurring for the sake of claiming a relationship to somebody famous more donors would have likely mysteriously possessed the same qualifier of Gotiputa (amongst others).

Sanchi Inscription 161[544]
(SG2)

1 subāhitasa gotiputasa rāja-lipikarasa dāna [/]

"A gift of the royal-scribe Subāhita, a Gotiputa."

Subāhita donated only once but his wife, named Majhimā, gave three separate cross-bars:

Sanchi Inscription 159[545]
(SG2)

1 subāhitasa pajāvatiyā majhimāyā dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Majhimā, wife of Subāhita."

Subāhita not only worked for a local royal court but was also extremely generous, accounting for four donations between him and his wife. Subāhita's income likely afforded his family this luxury, although it could certainly be that he was simply just very generous. Either way, Subāhita's activity as a donor fits the description of the kind and giving *sapurisa* even though he does not receive that title like his relative. Subāhita and his wife, coincidentally named Majhimā like one of the enshrined male *sapurisa*-s from *stūpa* 2, may have been brāhmaṇa-s by birth if they shared ancestry with the enshrined Gotiputa.

The second Gotiputa found on the great *stūpa vedikā* was a monk:

Sanchi Inscription 276[546]
(SG2)

1 [go]tiputasa[547]
2 bhaṁḍukasa

[544] MM 175.
[545] MM 173. Majhimā was also responsible for the donations of Tsuk. 158 / MM 172 and, probably, Tsuk. 157 / MM 171. The third is heavily fragmented to the point that it is unreadable save from the name Subāhita. All three donations are on a trio of cross-bars fit between the same two rail-pillars, thus indicating a clear intention to group them by donor, who in this case was Majhimā.
[546] MM 290.
[547] We can complete the reading of 'gotiputa' based on Bhaṁḍuka's concurrent inscriptions.

3 bhichuno dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of the monk Bhaṁḍuka, a Gotiputa."

Bhaṁduka, like his kinsman listed above, also donated multiple times. Overall, he was responsible for two separate donations. Like the Gotiputa enshrined in *stūpa* 2, who was presumably also a monk, Bhaṁḍuka was remembered as a teacher:

Sanchi Inscription 251[548]
(SG2)

1 aya-kānasa bhichuno dānaṁ aya-bhaṁḍukiyasa [//]

"A gift of the monk Noble Kāna, [a pupil] of Noble Bhaṁḍuka."

While Bhaṁḍuka's donative inscription is not particularly interesting by itself, there exist five separate inscriptions like Kāna's above. In each, Bhaṁḍuka is implied[549] to be the monastic elder, thus forming a lineage. The five disciples are named Budharakhita, Kāna, Dhamadata, Arahatapālita, and Saṁghila. In three Bhaṁḍuka is given the title *aya* ('noble'). Kāna's record is exceptional because he too is given the same title. In other words, Bhaṁḍuka the Gotiputa was an exceptionally revered monastic teacher as well as donor during SG2 and may have been, like his enshrined kin, a *brāhmaṇa*.

Summary

In reviewing these occurrences of Gotiputas it becomes clear that involvement in religion was the Gotiputa "family"[550] business for several generations across a vast area of geography. The earliest (2nd century BCE) Gotiputas appear at Mathura and were Jaina,

[548] MM 265.

[549] Even though the word *atevāsin* is not present, as far back as Lüders list every editor and translator has taken this set of inscriptions the same way: as being a teacher/disciple relationship. Elsewhere at Sanchi the word is frequently used, as many as 13 times at Sanchi. The very same monastic teacher/pupil relationship was very common and present in these inscriptions.

[550] Although likely, it is unclear for certain if these people were, in fact, genetically related, geographically related, religiously related, or not related at all since it may have been a matter of happenstance that

one of whom was a *kālavāḷa* (‘local government official’). The second was a *sovaṇika* (‘goldsmith’). At Bharhut, the Gotiputa was a local ruler, perhaps a vassal for the Śuṅgas. At Kosambi, the Gotiputa was described variously as a *gahapati* (‘householder’) and as a *sathavāha* (‘caravan leader’). As a *gahapati*, the man would have been part of a wealthy land-owning class with many political and social responsibilities. As a *sathavāha*, the man may have had social access to traveling monks who could have assisted his mercantile endeavor in avoid taxes and fees. Lastly, at Sanchi and its surrounding *stūpa* sites, at least one distinguished Gotiputa was enshrined for worship. He was given many titles, including *sapurisa* (‘virtuous man’), *kākanava-pabhāsana* (‘the light of Sanchi’), *Dudubhisara-dāyāda* (‘the spiritual heir to Dudubhisara’), and *vināyaka* (‘leader’). Moreover, the same Gotiputa established an lineage of monastics who all paid homage to the same Gotiputa. Some time later, also at Sanchi, during what I call SG2 in the late 1st century BCE, a number of donative records show that the Gotiputa lineage persisted and its descendants were substantial donors. One of them found work as a *rāja-lipikara* (‘royal scribe’) who had a very generous wife named Majhimā. A second was not only a donor but himself a revered monastic teacher. At least five other monastics refer to him as their teacher thus making the internal monastic Gotiputa lineage at Sanchi during SG2 quite strong and a functional continuation of the lineage began pre-SG1 with the enshrined Gotiputa.

I view each of the Gotiputas previously described as family scions. These scions, from generation to generation, gradually grew in importance and in prominence, likely in

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individuals with the same personal names and/or titles occupied more or less many of the same spaces at

conjunction with their rising wealth, fame, and perhaps religious institutional power. The Gotiputas living in and around Sanchi working as financiers and teachers displayed great loyalty to the Buddhist *saṁgha*. So much loyalty, in fact, that some individuals known as Gotiputa acquired their own followers inside and outside of the monastic order. This unique vantage point afforded them a great luxury: enshrinement. Their names are not only etched in permanent sandstone near the presumed remains of the Buddha himself in Sanchi *stūpa* 1 but relics of at least one Gotiputa was setup as an object of worship at Sanchi *stūpa* 2, Sonari *stūpa* 2, and Andher *stūpa* 2.

This history of the Gotiputas tells their story using only the available evidence, which is unfortunately quite limited. Using textual references when possible and concurrent inscriptions, I investigated what I believe to be a major group of financiers responsible at some level for Sanchi's evolution as a pilgrimage site and network hub. Below I will again deploy donative epigraphy to attempt to draw out the impact of financiers like the Gotiputas.

4.3 REVISITING COLLECTIVE PATRONAGE

Because the direct evidence for the Gotiputas is limited, it is worthwhile to look closer at their effect, as charismatic leaders within the *saṁgha*, on donation as an institutional process. To do that, I will study the inscriptional donative formulae broadly. I will present a history of the donative formulae as it appears at Buddhist sites throughout the subcontinent through the first few centuries of the Common Era. In Chapter 3, I demonstrated that the plethora of short-form donative inscriptions found at places like

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the same times.

Sanchi typified a specific kind of patronage pattern that changed between at least two generations. Here I would like to consider the rest of the story—the other kinds of donative inscriptions that appear at Buddhist sites during the Early Historic Period. Ultimately, I argue that short-form donative epigraphic style ended in favor of a more efficient long-form donative epigraphic style that featured only a few specific, albeit powerful donors. The long-form donative epigraphic style may have assuaged the wealthy and powerful donors by giving them their own reserved space on the monument—such a stylistic shift was tailored for donors like the Gotiputas who were at the forefront of donor networks like Sanchi.

The Short-Form Style

Chapter 3 listed a multitude of examples representative of the short-form donative inscription as it was found at Sanchi and other places like Bharhut and Amaravati. However, to reiterate, the style contains a very simple listing of its anatomical elements: the person, perhaps their professional affiliation, a relative, their home village, and the word *dānaṁ* at the end. There was some variation as the style evolved over time with some of the elements switching location or additional words being added to compensate for lesser appearing scenarios like more than one donor, etc. More or less the inscriptions looked like the following:

Sanchi Inscription 288[551]

1 pusasa cahaṭiyasa bhuchuno dānaṁ [//]

"A gift of the monk Pusa [from] Cahaṭa."

[551] MM 302.

From the late 2nd century BCE until roughly the 1st century CE the short-form style dotted many monuments at Buddhist sites. As I argued previously in Chapter 3, I hypothesize that the purpose of the short-form donative inscription was at least partially for posterity and administrative function as the inscriptions resemble labels existing on mercantile seals to mark commodities.

Functionally, the short-form style typifies what Vidya Dehejia has called in her widely cited article from 1992 "collective and popular patronage."[552] In her model, donations to the monastic community funded monumental construction projects and came through the "generosity of the common man, by a process of collective donation [*en masse*]."[553] For her, "the recording of the gift was perhaps all that was necessary for the donor to feel secure about receiving religious merit."[554] Geographically, she felt that collective patronage "was a pan-Indian phenomenon" and that "the wealth necessary to indulge in such a luxury [like donation] belonged to persons of humbler professions like the ironmonger and stone mason, the gardener and the fisherman."[555] Dehejia lastly contrasts the collective patronage style with the "exclusively royal patronage"[556] found in the later art of India whereby "the patron-monarch's prime concern was to ensure that the religious merit of construction accrued to him alone."[557] The short-form inscription was the perfect instrument for such an ideal since it allowed for the expression of generosity of the common man on such a large scale.

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[552] Dehejia, "The Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage."
[553] Dehejia, "The Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage," p. 35.
[554] Dehejia, "The Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage," p. 41.
[555] Dehejia, "The Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage," p. 44.
[556] Dehejia, "The Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage," p. 45.
[557] Dehejia, "The Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage," p. 44.

Indeed the "collective patronage" ideal fulfills the lay obligation to support the monastic institution in return for merit; it may be too romantic to see it as *the* persistent, recognizable form of patronage. Even from within the collective patronage eras we can see a different tendency altogether subtly at work: many and, in the case of SG1, most, of the donors are either elite monastic Buddhists from within the order, like the followers of the Hemavata Mainstream Buddhist school as propagated by the Gotiputas, or donors that are clearly identified as wealthy patrons equaling the total gifting power of entire villages. Many other inscriptions are duplicates or relate to one another through monastic families, lay families, or by way of collective gifts from entire villages or residences resulting in ongoing endowments, all of which decidedly reduces the actual number of common patrons and only hardly representing the "humbler professions" that Dehejia describes.[558]

Furthermore, looking at donation-over-time, it is clear from the inscriptions on the archways (*toraṇa*-s) that by the time they were erected the collective ideal was becoming abandoned in favor of larger, more influential gifts made by wealthier donors, perhaps just one generation after the construction of the stone *vedikā*. Where hundreds of donations were required for the creation of the 1st century BCE *vedikā*, only 15 were required for the construction of the four *toraṇa*-s. One such donation reads:

[558] Dehejia, "The Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage," p. 44.

Sanchi Stūpa 1 Toraṇa Inscription 384[559]
(Early 1st century CE)

1 rāño siri-sātakaṇisa
2 āvesanisa vāsiṭhiputrasa
3 ānaṁdasa dānaṁ [/]

"A gift of Ānaṁda, the foreman of the artisans for King Siri-Sātakaṇi, a Vāsiṭhiputra."

Not only does the text of the inscription itself connote wealth and power, being that the donor, Ānaṁda was a royal foreman for the ruling king, but so too does its physical position on the gateway. It is centered on the South Gateways top architrave inside of an elaborately carved bas-relief panel. The inscription appears inside of a pictorial representation of a *stūpa* in the direct center of the architrave at the top of the gateway itself, nearly as high as the top of the *stūpa* 1. Its unclear if Ānaṁda commissioned the artwork or if he was simply just the foreman of the artists who did the physical work—however, regardless, he had somehow obtained the honored status of having one of the premier locations on the whole monument. Today, visitors who walk up the stairs to the upper circumambulatory path will inevitably view Ānaṁda's inscription since it faces the *stūpa* and thus the viewer. The pictorial representation of the *stūpa* is dominated by the *brāhmī* of the record and is unmissable. The change to inscriptions appearing as Ānaṁda's does happens within a century and begs the question: what happened? I believe it may be advantageous to look elsewhere to begin re-assessing patronage as a historical process.

Despite the temptation because of how the inscriptions are presented in volumes like Marshall's and Lüders', it is inaccurate to lump together all these generations and identify a singular process that defines the era. There were a number of factors happening

[559] MM 398.

simultaneously that went into the eventual recording of donative records on stone like the increasing complexity of a burgeoning religious institution still attempting to locate its identity. One major omission from Dehejia's study is the power of singular agents, namely those who either were represented, or somehow institutionally connected to what I call the charismatic luminaries like the Gotiputas. In reassessing the styles of patronage as represented in donative inscriptions throughout the Early Historic Period, I propose an overhaul to the label "collective patronage." Below I present a concurrent and longer-lasting style found at many of the very same Buddhist sites during the same periods and afterwards. The long-form style studied below is much more telling of how the Buddhist religious institution viewed patronage over time since its elements can be examined with a much more in-depth philological lens. I suggest that this particular style of gathering funds and recording them *en-masse* in stone surrounding a monument was short lived since we scarcely see any records after the 1st century CE nor any of its common anatomical elements. Historically, if elites like the Gotiputas who operated both inside and outside the saṁgha mustered increasing influence then it could be that the long-form style was better suited to their presence.

The Long-Form Style

In the collective patronage model, donations to the monastic community funded monumental construction projects and came through the collective generosity of everyday persons. The "collective patronage" ideal draws exclusively on a select reading of donative inscriptions from central and western India. In my analysis here, I draw upon the extant corpus of epigraphic material known from the Early Historic Period but attempt to present an alternative conclusion using a deeper study of the inscriptions'

language. This model was not the only form of patronage during the Early Historic Period and may prove to be *the exception rather than the rule in the formation of the early monastic institution*. I argue that the "collective patronage" ideal might have been a temporary process for which we have no subsequent evidence for after the 1st century CE. Instead, some evidence shows how the early Indian Buddhist monastic institution funded, maintained, and expanded its monumental construction projects using a more heavy-handed model that may give us further clues as to how the Buddhist institution viewed patronage and used it for its own survival and growth.

Archaeologist Julia Shaw discovered an important inscription at Mawasa, near Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh that introduces the long-form donative inscription:

Mawasa Stūpa Inscription
(1st century BCE)[560]

1 makaḍeyena karapite

"Caused to be made by Makaḍeya."

The verbal participle is in the *causative*, thus suggesting that some object or structure at Mawasa was "caused to be erected." *Karapite*[561] is a causative formation from the verb root √kṛ and works with the instrumental singular of the proper name, Makaḍeya. The Mawasa inscription was found near a *stūpa*, erected for worship by monks and the laity alike. The inscription presumably describes the construction of that single *stūpa* by one Makaḍeya—certainly an influential donor responsible for an object of worship as a solitary individual. The Mawasa inscription appears in direct contrast to Dehejia's "collective patronage" ideal. Collective patronage as a theme suggests an egalitarian, if

[560] Shaw, "Monasteries, Monasticism, and Patronage in Ancient India."

not democratic approach to the funding of monastic worship centers like Sanchi. At least 70 analogous inscriptions to Mawasa from the Indian subcontinent require further analysis.

Table 4.1: 70 causative verbal formations sorted chronologically (300 BCE – 300 CE)

No.	Verb	Date	Location	Object	Gift Marker
1	√kṛ	3rd BCE	Delhi-Topra	Rest-houses / drinking places	none
2	√kṛ	2nd BCE	Nasik	Lena (cave)	none
3	√kṛ	2nd BCE	Kolhapur	Relic box	dānaṁ
4	√kṛ	1st BCE	Mawasa	Stone (for a stūpa?)	none
5	√kṛ	1st BCE	Bedsa	Stūpa	none
6	√kṛ	1st BCE	Bharhut	Toraṇa (gateway/archway)	none
7	√kṛ	1st BCE	Karle	Thabha (pillar)	none
8	√kṛ	1st BCE	Pabhosa	Lena (cave)	none
9	√kṛ	1st BCE	Pale	Lena (cave)	none
10	√kṛ	1st CE	Amaravati	Abadamala (?)	deyadhamaṃ
11	√kṛ	1st CE	Amaravati	Dāra (doorway/jamb)	deyadhamaṃ
12	√kṛ	1st CE	Kaushambi	Vihāra (monastery)	none
13	√kṛ	1st CE	Mathura	Vedika (railing)	none
14	pra+√sthā	1st CE	Amaravati	Abadamala (?), on slabs with svastika	none
15	pra+√sthā	1st CE	Amaravati	On a sculpture	deyadhamaṃ
16	√kṛ	2nd CE	Kanheri	Vihāra (cave monastery) / cetiya (shrine) / kuṭi (hut) / saghārama (monastery)	deyadhamaṃ
17	√kṛ	2nd CE	Nasik	Lena (cave)	deyadhamaṃ
18	√kṛ	2nd CE	Nasik	Lena (cave)	deyadhamaṃ
19	√kṛ	2nd CE	Nasik	Lena (cave) / cetiya (shrine) / pāṇiyapoḍhi (cisterns)	none
20	√kṛ	2nd CE	Nasik	Vedika (railing) / yakha (sculpture)	none
21	√kṛ	2nd CE	Nasik	Lena (cave)	none
22	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Amaravati	?[562]	deyadhamaṃ
23	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Amaravati	?	none
24	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Guntupalli	Khambha (pillar)	deyadhamaṃ
25	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Jaggayyapeta	5 āyaka-khambha (stone pillars for entrance)	deyadhamaṃ
26	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Jaggayyapeta	5 āyaka-khambha (stone pillars for entrance)	deyadhamaṃ
27	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Jaggayyapeta	5 āyaka-khambha (stone pillars for entrance)	deyadhamaṃ
28	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Kanheri	Cetiya (shrine)	none
29	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Kanheri	Layana (cave) / pāṇiyapoḍhi (cisterns) / āsaṇapeḍhika (seat) / cankama (path)	deyadhamaṃ
30	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Kanheri	Lena (cave) / pāṇiyapoḍhi (cisterns)	deyadhamaṃ

[561] Karapite is a declined as nom., singular, masculine with the Eastern Prakritic -e termination and Western Prakritic -r-.

[562] Records listed with a question mark are fragmented and incomplete. However, enough remains to identify the causative verb.

31	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Kanheri	Lena (cave)	deyadhamaṃ
32	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Kanheri	Lena (cave)	deyadhamaṃ
33	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Kanheri	Lena (cave)	deyadhamaṃ
34	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Kanheri	Lena (cave) / pāṇiyapoḍhi (cisterns)	deyadhamaṃ
35	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Kanheri	Lena (cave) / pāṇiyapoḍhi (cisterns)	deyadhamaṃ
36	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Kaushambi	Bodhisatva (statue)	none
37	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Sarnath	Bodhisatva (statue) / chatra (parasol)	none
38	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Sarnath	Bodhisatva (statue)	none
39	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Sarnath	Bodhisatva (statue) / chatra (parasol)	none
40	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Sanchi	Statue	deyadhamaṃ
41	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Sanchi	Pratimā (image) Sakyamuni	none
42	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Sanchi	Pratimā (image) Maitreya	none
43	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Mathura	Bodhisatva (statue)	none
44	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Mathura	Pratimā (image) Buddha (Sakyamuni?)	none
45	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Mathura	Pratimā (image) Amitābha	none
46	pra+√sthā	2nd CE	Mathura	Pratimā (image) / chatra (parasol)	none
47	pra+√sthā	2nd CE ?	Amaravati	Padhānama[ḍa]vo (hall for practicing religious exercises)	deyadhamaṃ
48	pra+√sthā	2nd CE ?	Ahicchatra	Maitreya sculpture	none
49	√kṛ	3rd CE	Ghantasala	Toraṇa (archway) /vedika (railing) / gandhakuti (perfume hall) / sela-mandapa	none
50	√kṛ	3rd CE	Ghantasala	Toraṇa (archway) /vedika (railing) / gandhakuti (perfume hall) / sela-mandapa	none
51	√kṛ	3rd CE	Kanheri	Lena (cave)	none
52	√kṛ	3rd CE	Nagarjunakonda	Vihāra (monastery)	none
53	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Amaravati	Peṃḍaka (upright/jamb)	none
54	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Amaravati	Uṃnisa (coping-stone)	deyadhamaṃ
55	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Amaravati	Uṃnisa (coping-stone)	none
56	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Amaravati	Uṃnisa (coping-stone)	none
57	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Amaravati	Divakhambha (lamps)	none
58	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Amaravati	Uṃnisa (coping-stone)	none
59	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Amaravati	Slab of/for khuda-cetiya (small shrine)	none
60	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Nagarjunakonda	Selakhaṃbham (stone pillar)	none
61	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Nagarjunakonda	Khaṃbham	none
62	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Nagarjunakonda	Khaṃbham	none
63	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Nagarjunakonda	Khambham	none
64	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Nagarjunakonda	Selakhambham	none
65	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Nagarjunakonda	Selakhambham	none
66	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Nagarjunakonda	Selakhambham	none
67	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Nagarjunakonda	Selakhambham	none
68	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Kanheri	Lena (cave)	none
69	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Mathura	Pratimā (image) Sakyamuni	none
70	pra+√sthā	3rd CE	Mathura	Bodhisata	none

Table 4.1: 70 causative verbal formations sorted chronologically (300 BCE – 300 CE)[563]

Like the Mawasa inscription, the roughly 70 other inscriptions use two basic causal verbal formations to refer to the construction of objects for use by the Buddhist religious order, past participles and finite verbs. All these causatives describing the establishment of some physical object come from one of two verbal roots, √kṛ or

pra+√sthā. Those derived from √kṛ nearly always appears in a past participle form, *kārita* or *karapita* while those derived from pra+√sthā, may appear as either a past participle or as a finite verb. Both are identifiable through their causal stems, although there is some variance depending on the Prakrit itself.

A representative example of the new long-form inscription from Sanchi reads:

Sanchi Inscription 907[564]
(2nd century CE)

1. ….sya+ r[ā]jāt[i]rājasya Devaputrasya ṣ[ā]h[i]-Vāsaṣkasya saṁ [20] 8 he 1 [di 5] [/] [e]tasy[āṁ] [p]u[rv]v[āyāṁ] bhagava[sya]
2. ….sya jambuchāyāśilā gṛ[ha]ś ca Dharmadevavihāre pratiṣṭāpitā [/] Verasya dhitaro Madhurikā
3. (ane)na deyadharmapari(tyāgena) …

"(During the reign) of the King Rājātirāja, Devaputra, Shāhi, Vāsaṣka in the year 28, in the first month of winter on its 5th day, there was a stone image showing the 'Jambu-Shade' episode of the Bhagavat's life and a shrine caused to be made in the Dharmadeva Vihāra by Madhurikā, the daughter of Vera…"

Not only does the long-form inscription provide a great deal more information about what exactly was erected but it also emphasizes the donor by placing them in a position of honor at the end of the inscription.[565] Although many more words are used, only one donor is recorded. Moreover, since the erected materials were objects of use, namely a shrine meant for worship and an image to be included, the donor would be continually honored for as long as the object or objects were known and utilized.

Out of these 70 total causatives relating to the installation, erection, creation, or construction of some object within a material context, only one appears with the word *dānaṃ*, like those at Sanchi. In fact, rather than *dānaṃ*, only 21 appear with any

[563] This sample is representative and not exhaustive.
[564] MM 828. See, also, Michael D Willis. "The Sānchī Bodhisattva Dated Kuṣāṇa Year 28." *Silk Road Art and Archaeology* 6 (1999): 269–73.
[565] I realize that the inscription is fragmented. Many are. However, most of the time in the long-form donative inscriptions the donor does come at the end of the inscription with limited detail after their name.

descriptor of the gift at all. Twenty use the word *deyadhamaṃ* to designate 'pious' or 'religious gifts.' The lack of a gift marker like *dānaṁ* in these donative records may indicate their difference from the records known from Sanchi that do utilize *dānaṃ*. The only causative inscription to employ *dānaṃ* comes from the 2nd century BCE site Kolhapur:

Kolhapur Inscription 1
(Late 2nd c. BCE?)

1 bamhasa dānaṃ
2 dhamagutena kāritaṃ

"[1] A gift of a *brāhmaṇa*.
"[2] Made by [a man named] Dhamaguta."

The translation of the two lines is somewhat ambiguous. However, Middle Indic 10th class causatives eventually lost their causative sense, thus making the *kāritaṁ* in the inscription not a true causative.[566] Most likely, the lines should be taken separately and that Dhamaguta is not the same person as the anonymous *brāhmaṇa* who gifted the vessel because the names are on separate lines and are in different grammatical cases. Dhamaguta could have been some sort of stonemason who personally constructed the stone reliquary. However, the inscription's two lines could be read together and have a causal connection. In this scenario, the *brāhmaṇa* who gifted the reliquary may have been persuaded to do so by Dhamaguta, whose status and connection to either the *brāhmaṇa* or the reliquary is unknown. He may have been a local ruler or a wealthy patron. Either way, the construction of the inscription is a far cry from the hundreds of succinct donative

[566] I thank Joel Brereton for pointing out this nuance of the language and solving this riddle.

inscriptions found from Sanchi in SG1 and SG2 that do not utilize any verb to connote the gift.

A simple chronological analysis of the appearance of these causative donative inscriptions over time shows that all but eight, or 62 of them, appear in or after the 1st century CE through the 3rd century CE. Only three of the eight inscriptions appearing before the turn of the millennium come from places other than the Western Deccan while Bharhut and Mawasa are the only inscriptions from locations that are not caves sites. This evidence reveals that before the Common Era, patronage at Buddhist sites was at least partially accumulated in a "collective" form as Dehejia[567] suggests, albeit with some reservations pertaining to the egalitarian nature of the donations themselves.

However, after the turn of the century, the number of donative inscriptions decreases dramatically all over South Asia. The use of *dānaṃ* as a designation of a gift to the *saṃgha* fades out as the use of *deyadhamaṃ* or 'religious gift' is ushered in. Is there a connection between the use of *deyadhamaṃ* as a descriptor of objects and the use of the causative? Moreover, is there a difference between the use of causative √kṛ and the use of causative pra+√sthā formations?

The evidence demonstrates that the use of *deyadhamaṃ* to describe an object installed at religious sites may be dependent on the location.[568] In the first through third centuries CE, *deyadhamaṃ* is only used at Amaravati, Guntupalli, and Jaggayyapeta along the eastern coast, and only at Kanheri and a single inscription from Nasik in the

[567] Dehejia, "The Collective and Popular Bases of Early Buddhist Patronage."
[568] Deyadhamaṁ and its variants are commonly used in Gandharan inscriptions as well. There is also one non-Buddhist usage of the word on a ceremonial mask from Peshawar. See Gerard Fussman. "Le 'Masque

western Deccan. Only one inscription from central India, at Sanchi in the 2nd century CE, contains *deyadhamaṃ* in a causative installation formula. Therefore, I infer that the use of *deyadhamaṃ* is not especially relevant in causative installation formulae but its popularity and development as a marker of ritualistic donation may have helped contribute to the change in ritualistic presentation of a construction project.

Regarding the two causative roots, √kṛ and pra+√sthā, I argue that the main difference is chronological and the result of linguistic fashion. Only 22 inscriptions out of the 70 utilize √kṛ. Meanwhile, every causative inscription utilizing pra+√sthā comes from after the turn into the Common Era. Causative √kṛ verbal constructions seem to describe the creation and establishment of monuments, caves, or archways—large features imbued with significant meaning—with only a few exceptions. Elsewhere, it is possible that at sites like Kanheri where both causative formations are used extensively to describe the creation or establishment of a cave (*lena*) there was a difference in cave contents, such as whether the cave was used for dwelling or worship. On the other hand, pra+√sthā causative constructions seem to describe the establishment of physical objects imbued with a variety of meanings, ranging from simple stone pillars to images of *bodhisatva*-s.

Looking more historically, Aśoka's use of these causative constructions in the 3rd century BCE serves as a possible *terminus post quem* for this kind of heavy-handed patronage. An excerpt from Pillar Edict 7 reads:

Court'." *Journal Asiatique* 279 (1991): 138–74 and, now, Harry Falk. "Śiva or Brahma? the 'Masque

Aśokan Pillar Edict 7 - Delhi Topra
(3rd century BCE)[569]

(S) aḍha-[kos]ikyāni pi me udupānāni 24 khānāpāpitāni niṃsi[ḍha]yā ca **kālāpitā** (T) āpānāni me ba[h]ukāni tata tata **k[ā]lāpitāni** paṭībhogāye p[a]su-munisānaṃ

"(S) And at intervals of eight [*krośa*-s], wells were caused to be dug by me, and flights of steps (for descending into the water) were caused to be built. (T) Numerous drinking-places were caused to be established by me, here and there, for the enjoyment of cattle and men."[570]

Aśoka uses only √kṛ causatives and not pra+√sthā, thus confirming my proposed timeline where √kṛ causatives were linguistically fashionable before the turn of the Common Era.

Interestingly, elsewhere in Aśoka's edicts, when describing the enlargement of a *stūpa* of the Buddha Konagamana, Aśoka does not use any causal constructions that became popular centuries later. Instead, for the enlargement to double its size of this object, imbued with plenty of religious significance, he deploys *vaḍhite* (Skt. *vardhitaḥ*) which may be translated to 'caused to be increased.' The use (and frequent non-use) of the causative by Aśoka may imply two things. First, Aśoka does not assign any greater meaning to construction projects on religious objects through the use of especially reserved verbs. Secondly, Aśoka's use of the causal stem from √kṛ in his PE7 is entirely consistent with the chronology I have suggested, although these examples may reflect an underdeveloped patronage model compared to the later centuries. √kṛ both predates the use of pra+√sthā constructions by at least several centuries and refers to generally the same kinds of objects. Therefore, one hypothesis I would like to put forth is that

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Court' at the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris." *Indo-Iranian Journal* 56 (2013): 381–96.
[569] Edition from Hultzsch, "Inscriptions of Asoka," p. 132.
[570] Edition from Hultzsch, "Inscriptions of Asoka," p. 135.

pra+√sthā did not describe special construction projects where objects were installed, enshrined, or otherwise established in any other way. Rather, pra+√sthā inscriptions appear exactly as the earlier series of √kṛ causal inscriptions do—on all objects, big, small, significant, or insignificant. The fact that the pra+√sthā causal formula appears on later objects that we do in fact assign great meaning, such as Buddha images, correlates well with the timeline we have for the independent development of such images which exist only after the 1st century CE according to extant evidence.[571]

In other words, I propose that translating *kārita* or *patiṭhāpita* etc. is entirely dependent upon context. If it is a pillar that is "caused" to come into existence the translation should be "a pillar caused to be erected by so and so." If it is a cave, it might be "caused to be excavated by so and so." If it is a *stūpa*, or an image, we might use the formula "caused to be enshrined by such and such." Ultimately, it seems that the switch from √kṛ causal constructions to pra+√sthā causal constructions is entirely dependent on linguistic fashions and not at all about the object being constructed. However, linguistic fashions may be indicative of a larger process at work on the institutional level.

The ivory worker inscription from Sanchi's south archway best exemplifies the difference between *causing* the construction of an object for religious use and actually physically creating that object. The inscription reads:

Sanchi Inscription 386[572]
(1st century CE)

[571] The appearance of the Buddha image as an art form has been quite controversial and may yet be proven to date to the first century BCE instead of the first century CE. However, the evidence is not entirely convincing, nor is the date. For a review, see Rob Linrothe. "Inquiries Into the Origin of the Buddha Image." *East and West* 43 (1993): 241–56.
[572] MM 400.

1 vedisakehi daṁtakārehi rupakaṁmaṁ kataṁ [//]

"Carving completed by the ivory-workers from Vedisa."

Key here is the verb participle, *kataṃ*, derived from the familiar root √kṛ but is not in the causative. These ivory workers from the nearby village of Vedisa are doubtlessly the actual engravers of the stone reliefs—and they may have even been the donors as well.[573] The verb they use is not the same as the causative verbs used elsewhere to describe heavy-handed patronage.

I would like to supplement this line of inquiry by reflecting on the subjects of these causatives. Who were they? Unlike nearly all the earlier inscriptions using *dānaṃ* to designate a ritual gift to the *saṃgha*, some inscriptions using the causative reference patrons with significant power, such as royals, as Shaw[574] speculated they would. In spite of this, in actuality, a vast majority of these causative inscriptions describe the acts of patrons with what we might call "medium" power levels compared to royals, like *gahapati*-s, merchants (*vaniya*-s), or artisans (*avesani*-s). Beyond these, we also find monks, nuns, and so-called 'ascetics' (*pavajita*-s) causing the establishment of caves, images, stone pillars, etc., exactly as they do at sites like Sanchi SG1 and SG2. Madhurikā's causative long-form donative inscription from Sanchi (no. 907) exemplifies this concept perfectly since she was not given any title or family name. Since the causative formations reveal that patrons "causing" to construct, erect, excavate, or install came from nearly the same corners of society as those in Dehejia's "collective" egalitarian patronage pattern from the 1st century BCE, it may be fair to say that *that*

[573] However, the inscription might simply be a labeling inscription to give credit where credit was due. Without the word *dāna* or any other marker of donation it is difficult to know.

form of patronage was replaced or had at least significantly diminished by the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd centuries CE, possibly coinciding with the ongoing development of institutionalized monasticism, the slow rise of the Mahāyāna, and/or the changing nature of monastic-lay relations. Furthermore, these particular records demonstrate that the use of the causative to describe the installation of everything from mundane objects such as pillars to objects infused with substantial meaning like images or *stūpa*-s, was far more widespread and common place than what Shaw[575] recently hypothesized. In the end, I have begun to develop an alternative hypothesis: "collective patronage" was only popular during a single phase of Indian Buddhism and at particular sites. It was likely replaced a more efficient means of patronage, known earlier in archaic form by Aśoka, whereby wealthier donors were solicited and more permanent, sustained endowments were obtained all across ancient South Asia.

To summarize, our timeline studied in this section looks like this: during SG1 and SG2, the Gotiputas and other elites like them were donating common architectural fragments like cross-bars, rail-pillars, and coping-stones at Sanchi using the short-form patronage formula. Later, after those generations, into the Common Era, the same kinds of people continued to donate large sums of money for the sake of monumental construction projects. However, the formulae which recorded those donations changed to reflect a greater emphasis on the singular donor. A number of features of the formulae reflected a shift in patronage style and emphasis.

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[574] Shaw, "Monasteries, Monasticism, and Patronage in Ancient India."

4.4 ELITES THROUGH TIME

At Sanchi, as previously discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, two major generations of donors appear in the historical record. Each generation (SG1 and SG2) can be viewed from one of two angles: the micro and macro perspectives. From a micro perspective, I extracted individual demographics from the whole body of the inscriptions as they were found between the two generations. From the macro perspective, I was able to study the network existing between Sanchi, a hub, and its nodes to explore the network's efficiency and how it operated. Both perspectives are able to disclose vital parts of the patronage system in place at Sanchi and within its network. The present chapter aims to add another layer to the macro perspective in researching a key set of financiers. By delving into the evidence with the intention of clarifying the presence of elite donors like the Gotiputas, I hope to illuminate their unique status as donors and objects of veneration at Sanchi.

Broadly speaking, all donors during SG1 and SG2 may be placed into one of several categories: 1.) those with monastic titles like like *aya* ('Noble One'), *bhadata* ('venerable'), or *aṁtevasin* ('pupil'); 2.) those with specific monastic specializations, such as *bhāṇaka* ('reciter') or *pacanekayika* ('knower of the five *Nikāya*-s'); 3.) donors who identify themselves primarily based on their relationship to someone else, such as being the mother or wife of so and so; 4.) those who are part of the wealthy elite, like *vanija*-s (merchants), or *seṭhin*-s (guild members); 5.) those donating as part of a group, either small or large; and 6.) those records which are unremarkable in that they do not

[575] Shaw, "Monasteries, Monasticism, and Patronage in Ancient India."

provide much directly useful sociological information. The last group is was discussed previously in Chapter 3 and is not relevant to the present discussion.

Category	SG1	SG2	Change
Monastic Titles	6.2%	6%	None
Monastic Specializations	1.5%	1.6%	None
Relatives	11.3%	12.6%	Increase
Wealthy Elites	3.11%	10.5%	Increase
Group	7.8%	7%	None

Table 4.2: Donations According to Category

My efforts to compare and contrast these generations with the categories of donors are summarized briefly in Table 4.2. SG1 is typified by the numerous high members of the monastic *saṁgha* contributing to funding the architecture at Sanchi *stūpa* 2. Without taking into consideration the monks and nuns whose records may be found in high volumes at Sanchi, it is obvious that the monastic order itself had a vested interest in funding these construction projects from within. The reason for this is not immediately clear; however, we may speculate that the monks and nuns, especially those with titles and specializations, were able to utilize their own established private wealth to get the projects initially off the ground. Whether they were making up for a lack of patronage from outside the order by "filling in the gaps" or not is impossible to accurately discern. Nevertheless, considering that Sanchi *stūpa* 2 contains the relics not of the Buddha, but of illustrious monastic Buddhist luminaries, including one Gotiputa and his disciples, it might make sense that students and students of students were eager to generate funds to

honor their forefathers. They may have also been eager to accumulate merit by having their name permanently associated with the *stūpa* and its reliquaries.[576]

In SG2, there is a stable number of donors in these categories. Given the dramatic increase of donors who self-identify as being a wealthy elite and also by donors who identify their relatives, it seems palpable that the monastic overseers of solicitation were quite successful in recruiting new donors who were already familiar with Sanchi through their social peers (wealthy elites) or relatives while maintaining their own levels of contribution. This signals a victory on behalf of the monastic community. No longer did the *saṁgha* itself *need* to pour in their own personal wealth, whether it was from earlier in their life before entering the *saṁgha* or from wealth generated as a community (or individually) while having donned monastic robes. Instead, construction projects or events held at the *stūpa*-s were grand and convincing enough of a display to generate vast numbers of donors from targeted communities, not to mention the strength of the Buddha's teachings, which were likely used as a type of selling point. The huge increase in relatives of other donors gifting funds indicates that there was most likely a strong "word of mouth" spread of positive feedback about the Buddhist *saṁgha*.[577]

From the inscriptions, it is obvious that there is a concerted effort on behalf of the inscriber and overseer of works to indicate which donors were foreign to the area where the *stūpa* was erected. The records are clear and more or less follow the same pattern. In Chapter 3, I labeled these donors as local and non-local. To briefly recap, SG1 had donors

[576] As argued by Schopen in "What's in a Name," pp. 58–73.
[577] These might have been just some of the advantages the Sanchi *saṁgha* had acquired within the so-called marketplace of ideas functioning in and around the region.

come from at least 37 locations and SG2 had donors from at least 55 different places. When analyzing the sociality of the monastic order according to the donative records, I noticed several important trends that amplify my analysis of the two generations and the five donor categories.

SG1	Local	Non-Local
Monastic Titles	4.3%	2%
Monastic Specializations	1.17%	.3%
Relatives	7.4%	4%
Wealthy Elites	2.33%	.8%
Group	5%	2.7%
Villages / Towns / Cities		37
Non-Local Donations per Locality (on average)		3.3

Table 4.3: Donations According to Category and Locality in SG1

SG2	Local	Non-Local
Monastic Titles	3.7%	2.15%
Monastic Specializations	1.1%	.2%
Relatives	4.7%	8%
Wealthy Elites	3.8%	6.7%
Group	2.7%	4.3%
Villages / Towns / Cities		55
Non-Local Donations per Locality (on average)		4.2

Table 4.4: Donations According to Category and Locality in SG2

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 cross-list SG1 and SG2's local and non-local donors with the aforementioned seven categories. A number of important observations can be made in the data that supports the arguments made above. First, the near-equal numbers of monastic donations from either category remains roughly the same between the generations,

indicating that the saṁgha was equally as sturdy and did not need to infuse its own money, local or non-local, directly into the construction projects.

Even though the number of donations from relatives increased slightly between the generations, from the breakdown according to location we can see that local relatives decreased from 7.4% to 4.7%. Meanwhile, the non-local donors mentioning relatives doubled from 4% to 8%. This further reflects the strong word-of-mouth solicitation that happened between donors. The fact that the doubling happened amongst donors who were not from the immediate Sanchi vicinity suggests that the Sanchi *saṁgha* was able to create a positive image of itself in the minds of non-locals who had friends and family already generously donate. Instead of soliciting other monastic Buddhists, the *saṁgha* stepped up its effort to solicit relatives and wealthy elites locally and non-locally.

An inverse change happened between local and non-local group donations. During SG1, local group donations was at 5% but fell to just 2.7% during SG2. In SG1, only 2.7% of the donations were non-local group donations but in SG2 that number grew to 4.3%. This inverse change also establishes the strength of the Sanchi *saṁgha*'s non-local reputation since donors who were not able to individually contribute to the saṁgha were eager to do so in any capacity they could find even if it meant sharing the social clout or spiritual merit with others within a group donation.

Last but not least the number of local wealthy elites donations increased from 2.33% to 3.8%. However, the most startling category—non-local wealthy elites—octupled between the generations. A more than 800% increase in donations in this

category is indicative of a persistent systemic change at the institutional level.[578] Either the *saṁgha* was that much more appealing to wealth elite donors and/or the *saṁgha* created a specific plan to solicit those kinds of donors. Either way, the strategy was successful and the wealthy elites were much larger financiers of the *stūpa* 1 ground *vedikā* than they were for any part of the previous stone monuments at Sanchi.

Within that group was the aforementioned Gotiputa Subāhita and his wife. Within the group that may have been responsible for strategizing the plan may have been the venerable Gotiputa named Bhaṁḍuka and his various monastic disciples. Although it is speculation only, it is not difficult to connect the dots from the enshrinement of one or more *brāhmaṇa* Gotiputas at Sanchi, Sonari, and Andher to the successful patronage campaigns at many decades later during SG1 and SG2. The Gotiputas could have found a formula for success that allowed the Buddhist *saṁgha* to substantially materially prosper.

4.5 HOUSE OF THE TEACHERS

Was there any lasting effect, if any, of the Gotiputa group on Sanchi if, by the early centuries of the Common Era, patronage forms shifted away from the previously established style that literally enshrined the Gotiputas? The answer to this question is completely obscure as we have no references to them in Buddhist literature and linking them with certain characters, fictional or not, would be a dangerous task. Historically, what is clear, at least I think according to the evidence I have accumulated, is that the Gotiputas, especially the enshrined Gotiputa, utilized their leadership in a number of ways to promote the Sanchi node. We know that they used family scions to carry on the

[578] One additional factor may have been the mobility afforded by long-distance routes through Vedisa.

family brand of Buddhism; they specialized in being at the right place at the right time alongside an increased number of other wealthy elites; and they probably helped in other ways we may never be able to know. The entire market in the Sanchi vicinity was "bought up" and Buddhist *stūpa*-s were erected throughout the landscape, many of which housed relics of the Gotiputas and other local elites.

This may be best illustrated in a curious recurring, non-dedicatory inscription found on the Sanchi gateways surrounding *stūpa* 1. The inscription is the famous imprecation that damns anybody who "dismantles" or "causes to dismantle" the gateway:

Sanchi Inscription 382[579]
East Gateway Imprecation
(Late 1st c. BCE or early 1st c. CE)

1 [yo]ito kākaṇā[vā]to toraṇa vedikā vā
2 upāḍeyā upāḍā[peya] vā ānaṁ vā ācariyakulaṁ
3a saṁkāmeyā so ma=
3b tighātina pitighātina
4a arahaṁtaghātina
5a rudhir 'upāyakāna sa=
4b ghabhe(dina) . . . . . te du .cita . .
5b nasa pāpā=
6 kārina+ sav[e] mā. .+ paṭipae. .+

"He who dismantles or causes to be dismantled, or transfers it to another Ācariya-Kulaṁ, the gateway or railing from Sanchi [Kākaṇāva] should be cursed to suffer the sins incurred by the murderers of mothers, murderers of fathers, murderers of Arhats, by those that cause bloodshed, and by those who create schism in the *saṁgha*."

Included in the imprecation is also a condemnation for anyone who moves any piece of the gateway to another *ācariya-kulaṁ*. The translation is often rendered 'house of the teacher.' But I do not think this is completely satisfying as the translation of *kula* conceals

[579] MM 396.

one shade of meaning with great implications. Schopen previously detailed how the phrase is also found in the *Upaniṣad*-s.[580] He cites Chāndogya 2.23.1:

> trayo dharmaskandhāḥ | yajño 'dhyayanaṃ dānam iti prathamaḥ | tapa eva dvitīyaḥ | brahmacāryācāryakulavāsī tṛtīyo 'tyantam ātmānam ācāryakule 'vasādayan | sarva ete puṇyalokā bhavanti | brahmasaṃstho 'mṛtatvam eti || ChUp_2,23.1 ||
>
> "There are three types of persons whose torso is the Law (dharma). The first is one who pursues sacrifice, Vedic recitation, and gift-giving. The second is one who is devoted solely to austerity. The third is a celibate student of the Veda living at his teacher's house—that is, a student who settles permanently at his teacher's house. All these gain worlds earned by merit. A person who is steadfast in *brahman* reaches immortality."[581]

The Upaniṣadic sense is that of an actual house meant to train students. Although in the imprecation it could refer to the "house of the teacher" meaning the Buddha and his *stūpa*, which literally houses him and his lineage, it does not seem quite right within the context of the site since Sanchi is a pilgrimage site centered on relics rather than monastic training like Nalanda.

An alternative is to take the phrase like it appears in the Pāli Canon. The *Kesi-sutta* (4.111) from the Aṅguttara deploys the only canonical usage of the term when the Buddha gives advice to Kesi the horse-trainer. The Buddha says that horses are like people in that they must be trained in a variety of ways (some with gentle behavior, some with harsh behavior, and others with both types). In his question to the Buddha, Kesi self-reflexively tells himself to 'not be a disgrace to my *ācariyakula*' in response to killing an untamable horse:

> "sace me, bhante, assadammo saṇhena vinayaṃ na upeti, pharusena vinayaṃ na upeti, saṇhapharusena vinayaṃ na upeti; hanāmi naṃ, bhante. taṃ kissa hetu? mā me ācariyakulassa avaṇṇo ahosī"ti. "bhagavā pana, bhante, anuttaro purisadammasārathi. kathaṃ pana, bhante, bhagavā purisadammaṃ vinetī"ti?

[580] Schopen, "Doing Business for the Lord," p. 551.
[581] Translation from Patrick Olivelle. *The Early Upanisads*, New York; Oxford: OUP, 1998, p. 197.

> "Bhante, if a horse to be tamed by me won't submit to discipline by any of these methods, then I kill him. For what reason? So that there will be no disgrace to my teacher's guild. But, Bhante, the Blessed One is the unsurpassed trainer of persons to be tamed. Just how does the Blessed One discipline a person to be tamed?"[582]

Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation of *ācariya-kula* as 'guild of the teacher' annuls what was intended in the Chāndogya as 'house the teacher,' which has little bearing on Buddhism's monastic practice.

From Sanchi itself are two donative inscriptions dating to SG2 (meaning they predate the *toraṇa* in discussion by a number of decades) that could add further analysis to *kula*:

Sanchi Inscription 420
(1st century BCE)
1 tuḍasa savakulasa

"[A gift] of the whole family of Tuḍa."

Sanchi Inscription 421
(1st century BCE)
2 cudasa pulaphasa savakulasa

"[A gift] of the whole family of Cuda."

There is much evidence previously gathered to show that the point of these inscriptions was donative and that the records simply refer to the families of these particular individuals (Tuḍa and Cuda).[583] It is plausible if not quite likely that this is the meaning of kula known in the imprecation inscription, especially since there is some textual precedent to suggest that phrase does not refer to an actual house or place and rather to the idea of a place where donor-relatives (e.g., one's 'guild') may reside. I propose, then,

[582] Translation by Bhikkhu Bodhi. *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012, p. 492.
[583] It seems likely that since they appear together on consecutive pavement slabs that they actually refer to the same person whose name was just spelled incorrectly in one (or both) of the records.

to translate *ācariya-kulaṁ* as 'family of the teacher' to better accomodate the context and the evidence. I argue that *ācariya-kulaṁ*[584] refers to the institution existing at the time of the recording, where actual teachers lived, taught, and had their families, including their monastic and actual families.

One last inscription, from Bharhut, completes our survey of inscriptional evidence:

Bharhut Inscription 1[585]
(Late 2nd century BCE / early 1st century BCE)

1 Suganam raje raño Gāgīputasa Visadevasa
2 pauteṇa+ Gotiputasa āgarajusa puteṇa
3 Vāchiputena Dhanabhūtina kāritaṃ toranāṃ
4 silākaṃmaṃto ca upaṃno [/]

"The gateway was caused to be made and the stone-work was produced by Vāchiputa Dhanabhūti, the son of Āgaraju Gotiputa, the grandson of *rāja* Visadeva Gāgīputa, during the reign of the Sugas."

This inscription was previously discussed above in section 4.2. However, here it is relevant also because it sits on one of Bharhut's *toraṇa*-s, just as the imprecation sits on all four of the Sanchi *toraṇa*-s. The wording is quite precise in the Bharhut inscription in that the *toraṇa* itself is referred to specifically: *toraṇāṁ silākaṁmaṁto* (='gateway and stone-work'). Similarly, in our imprecation from Sanchi, we have *toraṇa vedikā vā* ('railing or gateway'). However, because the imprecation appears on three of the four gateways,[586] and each time the imprecation appears slightly different with slightly different words, we have another variation:

Sanchi Inscription 390[587]

[584] In classical Indian Buddhism there is no instance where the word *ācariya* is only reserved for the Buddha. The term is broadly applied to leaders of schools, which are called *ācariya-vada*.
[585] This refers to Tsukamoto Bharhut inscription no. 1.
[586] The north gateway is devoid of any inscription at all. It is likely that the imprecation also appeared there at one point but was lost.
[587] MM 404.

West Gateway Imprecation
(Late 1st c. BCE or early 1st c. CE)

3a pacānatariya-kārakāna gat[iṁ] gacheya yo ito kākaṇāvāto selakame upā[deya] upā= ḍ[ā]peya vā
3b anaṁ vā ācariyakulaṁ saṁkāmeyā tase+ te pātakā bhaveya [//]

"He who dismantles or causes to be dismantled, or transfers it to another Ācariya-Kulaṁ, the stone-work from Sanchi shall be cursed with the Five Sins upon him."

Key here is that the imprecation refers again directly to the *toraṇa* and describes it as *selakama* ('stone work'), which is strikingly similar to the phrase recorded at Bharhut (*silā-kaṁmaṁta* = 'stone work'). In fact, the phrase is essentially the same except that the word is in a different grammatical case. The units of the compound word derive from the same two root words: the Sanskrit *śilā* ('stone' = Pāli *silā* = Pkt. *sila/sela*) and *karman* ('work' = Pāli *kamma* = Pkt. *kaṁma*). The second reference to "another" (*ana*-) *ācariyakula* may support the concept that the stūpa is itself an *ācariyakula*.

At Bharhut, the donor responsible for the stone-work was a non-monastic Gotiputa. At Sanchi, we do not know who was responsible for sponsoring the imprecatory inscriptions but there was at least one monastic Gotiputa and one non-monastic Gotiputa living and working in and around the *stūpa*-s during the same time period. The Gotiputa family, then, may fit the meaning of the *ācariya-kulaṁ* listed in the imprecations—that is, if the phrase does not actually refer to the Buddha and his ongoing lineage. However, the Gotiputas were a 'family of teachers' in both senses with their monastic teaching lineage well-established and also their non-monastic family visible in the extant material record at Sanchi. *Ācariya-kulaṁ*, while far from certain, may not actually reference the Buddha at all but rather refer directly to the local elite whose "house" the Sanchi monuments existed *within* on multiple levels, i.e., the level of the primary charismatic financier and

that of his relative the charismatic monastic teacher. If enshrinement in *stūpa* 2 was not the lasting achievement of the Gotiputas, then the knowledge of their involvement in erecting and maintaining the Sanchi *stūpa*-s might could have been.

4.6 DISCUSSION

Throughout this chapter, I have studied one example of what may have been an elite Buddhist family. Inside the monastic *saṁgha* they were at or near the top of the hierarchy. Outside the *saṁgha* they were wealthy elites who occupied key positions in society. Central to their positions was probably charisma. Undoubtedly, the family inherited wealth and power from their distant relatives and maintained it through the second generation of donors at Sanchi. As Weber observed long ago,

> charisma is a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader.[588]

That the Buddhists revered some of the Gotiputas as an example of a Weberian charismatic leader is seen in the permanent enshrinement at Sanchi *stūpa* 2, Sonari, and Andher.

Useful for supplementing this discussion is Weber's concept of the "routinization of charisma." For Weber, a charismatic leader transforms, or routinizes, personal charisma into a lasting institution whereby authority is reinforced, either directly by another leader or indirectly via a council or priesthood. Weber described six scenarios whereby charismatic authority might be routinized: 1.) the new leader imbues the same

qualities as the previous, like the search for the next Dalai Lama; 2.) by divine revelation; 3.) as designated by the original leader; 4.) designated by the charismatically qualified administrative staff and their recognition by the community (Weber is specific that this is not an election); 5.) hereditary transmission of charisma; and lastly 6: by magical ritual transmission.[589]

In the case of early Buddhism, Fogelin[590] has argued (pp. 148-150) that Early Historic Period monks manipulated ritual symbols and space to assert their "privileged relationship to the Buddha."[591] To come to these conclusions, Fogelin analyzed the ritual and presentation of space at a variety of *stūpa* complexes. He found that there were several types of rituals being conducted depending on the provided space. In rock-cut *caitya* halls, such as the ones in the Western Deccan, a *stūpa*'s circumambulatory path was small and dark, separated from a centralized assembly area by carved out pillars. There a person or very small group of persons would conduct internal, private rituals as they worshipped the *stūpa* through circumambulation or private prayer. In contrast, the space directly in front of the *stūpa* might be seen as an assembly hall whereby a corporate leader could stand in the front with the *stūpa* as his (or her) backdrop to deliver a dharma talk, lead a meditation session, or tell a story. He argues that the laity "privileged more individualized, meditative worship within the circumambulatory path over group worship practiced in an assembly area, which had less direct contact with the *stūpa*."[592] The

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[588] Max Weber. *On Charisma and Institution Building*. Edited by S N Eisenstadt, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1968, p. 48.
[589] Weber, *On Charisma and Institution Building*, pp. 55-59.
[590] Fogelin, "Ritual and Presentation in Early Buddhist Religious Architecture."
[591] Fogelin, "Ritual and Presentation in Early Buddhist Religious Architecture," pp. 148-150.
[592] Fogelin, "Ritual and Presentation in Early Buddhist Religious Architecture," pp. 148.

conclusion is that the laity seemingly "preferred" to worship the Buddha (or his relics) without the intervention of a ritual specialist, which at the time were very likely monastics.

However, the laity did not easily or quickly give in to this assertion and continued to access the Buddha (via his remains) directly at *stūpa*-s outside of the direct control of the *saṁgha*. The back and forth contest for authority was not settled quickly and likely continued well into the *Mahāyāna* period of Indian Buddhism due in large part to the fact that the *saṁgha* and the laity each "favored different forms of social solidarity, as each group sought the greater accumulation of power or autonomy."[593]

Thinking about the Gotiputas presented in this chapter, their charisma clearly functions within several of Weber's categories. They seem to have originally obtained their role by politically maneuvering into place (as they held political power before Sanchi *stūpa* 2 was built, as seen with their inscriptions at Bharhut and Kosambi) and then eventually set up themselves as transmitters of charisma via hereditary ascension (seen through the inscriptions beginning at Mathura and ending with the SG2 donative inscriptions at Sanchi). Fogelin's identification of tension within the *saṁgha*'s structure could partially explain some of the internal institutional developments during the time of the Gotiputas. Some of the Gotiputas were very clearly ingrained within the monastic order as prominent leaders who had taken vows. Others seemed to have steered clear of the robes and yet were still featured as guests of honor in their recorded inscriptions. I posit that the Gotiputas forged a new kind of routinization rooted in the economic

[593] Fogelin, "Ritual and Presentation in Early Buddhist Religious Architecture," pp. 149.

impulse. The Gotiputas' seem to have capitalized on the power held in personal connections, which could be appropriated effectively to expand the *saṁgha*'s patronage network, as the evidence demonstrates looking at the two donor generations (SG1 and SG2).

Charismatic Entrepreneurship

In my research, I kept coming across the problem of how to describe the Gotiputas to other scholars. They were financiers but not quite Medicis. They were charismatic leaders but definitely not founders of their own new religion. Essentially, they seem to be innovators who joined a new religion and became part of the upper tier. When I looked broadly for a comparison I found apt one in what are called Japanese "New Religions" (*shinshūkyō*)[594] that arose after the Edo period in 1867 and possessed many of the same exclusive traits, such as having a charismatic founder, a close-knit community full of mostly lay persons, and simple and syncretistic teachings, amongst others. The application of studying Japanese *shinshūkyō* to our study of ancient Indian religion rests on the identification and comparison of the charismatic qualities of *shinshūkyō* leaders and those within the early *saṁgha*. I argue that many of the same tools required to sustain the *shinshūkyō* religions were also in use during the Early Historic Period in India.[595]

[594] One definition of a *shinshūkyō* might be "any religions movement[s] originated by the people themselves independent of the tradition of established religions around and after the mid-nineteenth century in Japan." This definition is cited in Birgit Staemmler and Ulrich Dehn, *Establishing the Revolutionary: An Introduction to New Religions in Japan* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011), 1. The additional characteristics are those presented by the authors.

[595] I purposely veer away from the term 'cult' as it carries heavy, often negative baggage in today's Western cultural climate and contains its own lengthy academic history, which need not be reproduced or reanalyzed here. In the same way, I do not deploy the term 'sect' to give agency to the early Buddhist *saṁgha* in its own right while avoiding the question of whether it was an "offspring" of Upaniṣadic religious thought in the 5th or 4th century BCE. Undoubtedly, early Buddhism grew out of the rich philosophical environment existing in "Greater" Magadha at the time. Nevertheless, it is more stimulating

Nancy Stalker has written on one of the key elements that lead to one new Japanese religious groups gaining prominence. Stalked called this leadership quality "charismatic entrepreneurship" and found it in many of the Japanese *shinshūkyō*. Charismatic entrepreneurship is "a combination of spiritual authority, an intuitive grasp of the religious marketplace, savvy management skills, and a propensity for taking risks."[596] The particular movement that Stalker investigated, called Oomoto, was lead by Deguchi Onisaburo, a highly dynamic charismatic leader. Onisaburo lead Oomoto to spheres beyond the "religious" and had the budding group actively participate in the production, engagement, and use of modern forms of media, exchange, and technologies.[597] Stalker argued that Onisaburo's charismatic entrepreneurship exemplified one method of achieving religious legitimacy. She described the rapid development of Oomoto by its innovator through the lens of "profit motives."[598] A similar approach may

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to consider the early Buddhist *saṁgha* as its own burgeoning religion rather than "just" a branch of an established religion for many reasons.

[596] Nancy K Stalker. *Prophet Motive: Deguchi Onisaburō, Oomoto, and the Rise of New Religions in Imperial Japan*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008, p. 3. One fascinating aspect of the Japanese *shinshūkyō* that correlates well with the charismatic entrepreneur's role is the technological development that occurred in Japan during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. With advances in technology came advances in the media, which worked as both a boon and a burden for the emergent religions.

[597] Stalker's book contained little in the way of a theory of religion. It is instead a work of history. However, this does not mean it can easily be ignored in the formulation of a theory of religion. Stalker's approach could be criticized for being too cynical since it deliberately avoids much discussion of the Oomoto "belief system." I believe this to be a mistake and a misinterpretation of Stalker's goal. Her approach, rather, is refreshing, especially with regard to studying religions of the past (even the somewhat recent past). Her perspective was an enthusiastic look towards the formulation of a theory of religion that focuses on the "products" of religion's involvement in the economic (and, in turn, spiritual) market.

[598] Stalker's haunting historical setup of Oomoto may very easily be transferred to the study of nearly *any* religion in history that leaves behind a material record from which we can derive evidence. One of her main goals was to deeply analyze the relationship between a controversial religion and a modernizing Japanese economy from around 1910. While her book is by no means a biography of Onisaburo, his antics, innovative techniques, and charisma are certainly the subject. Oomoto's Onisaburo is interesting because "[h]e was the most successful charismatic entrepreneur of his day…[he] provided an important legacy and… identif[ied] contemporary spiritual needs and create[d] accessible doctrines, practices, and organizations that meet those needs." He fulfilled "unfulfilled demands in the spiritual marketplace…the

have been on the minds of the *saṁgha*'s elite during the time of the Gotiputas. The increased network efficiency (discussed in Chapter 3) seems to have been the product of a business-like strategy to identify and solicit non-local wealthy elites (discussed above), perhaps stemming from innovative, charismatic leadership at the top (from the Gotiputas or those like them).

Supply-Side Entrepreneurial Charisma

One of the most potent arguments in Stalker's book is that "religions and profit-oriented businesses share the same goals of growth, expansion, and reaching new customers."[599] In essence, one of the traits that makes a charismatic entrepreneur a strong agent for routinization is their ability to respond to change using their keen senses to evaluate the environment, a capacity to develop new products and services, and establish new methods of operation. To borrow terminology from sociology and economics, one insightful way to conceptualize the process of a charismatic entrepreneur routinizing the founder's charisma lies in Rational Choice Theory (RCT). RCT hypothesizes that individual people consciously and regularly make choices to maximize gain and

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popular demand for spiritualist practices, and the desire for enhanced communication with the universe that lay outside Japan" by creating a "large, multifaceted religious conglomerate" which "was different from the charismatic religious leaders that preceded him." His approach was "modern" in that it utilized the international exchange of goods, ideas, and services while exploiting the mass media for his own group's gain (pp. 193-4). Stalker's study succeeded at portraying the complex relationship between all these dimensions. Onisaburo generated greater public awareness through the creation of visibility, for better or worse. Using the newfound visibility, Onisaburo forged a public acceptance for his group. One example is Oomoto's spiritual and secular artistic "products" as an appealing religious commodity, which actively fulfilled a giant need in the spiritual marketplace. Onisaburo's charismatic aura (as Stalker describes it) seeps into every product that Oomoto manufactured during this period. Like an extremely successful performance artist, Onisaburo seemingly single-handedly willed his group into prominence with his widely appealing personality and art. Among the products he personally produced and promoted were photographic albums, art, prayers, poetry, dances, anthems, and various other products in the visual media (p. 110). Stalker pronounced Onisaburo's charisma as "re-enchant[ing] contemporary life in the face of the sterile condition of official religion in imperial Japan (p. 193)."

[599] Stalker*, Prophet Motive*, p. 14.

minimize loss. When it comes to religion, people will make the same types of choices in their engagement with religion just like any other. Choices made, then, even for the religious person, are made purposefully and are not random. Although RCT is not without its overt flaws[600] which are discussed below in greater detail, some recent scholarly applications of the theory to the sociology of religion yielded important observations pertaining to the relationship between religion and its institution.

Traditionally, RCT is applied to economic activities and moral choices.[601] However, in the past few decades, some sociologists of religion have begun to apply RCT concepts to religion and are beginning to analyze patterns of religious behavior and interpret these patterns.[602] Famously, Rodney Stark and William Sims Bainbridge define religions as "human organizations primarily engaged in providing general compensators based on supernatural assumptions."[603] To these authors, at least, religions survive because they fulfill basic human needs.

An example of RCT's utility comes from Stark and Finke.[604] They find that "costly churches are strong churches *because* they are costly – that rational actors will prefer more demanding churches because they offer a more favourable cost/benefit

[600] One trenchant criticism may be found in Ted Jelen. *Sacred Markets, Sacred Canopies*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002. Beyond what I discuss and propose below, see Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission*, pp. 16-17 for a thorough review of the critiques.
[601] Gary S Becker. *The Economic Approach to Human Behavior*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.
[602] Rodney Stark, and William Sims Bainbridge. *The Future of Religion*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985 and Stark, Rodney, and William Sims Bainbridge. *A Theory of Religion*, New York: P. Lang, 1987.
[603] Stark and Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion*, p. 8.
[604] Rodney Stark, and Roger Finke. *Acts of Faith*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

ratio."[605] One result of such a demand is doing better within the marketplace of religion, as a high commitment (say, financially) from the religious parishioner creates the impression of a high benefit (namely, salvation or liberation). The same might be said for ancient Indian religious tradition as well. If *brāhmaṇa*-s did not demand a high cost for their services then they might be viewed as untrained or even as frauds. For Buddhists, at least at Sanchi and probably for Bharhut and other similar locations, as time went on, demands for financial contributions likely led to higher participation rates as donors over time regularly seemed to have returned to the site to contribute again and again.[606] Here I view charismatic entrepreneurs as religious elites who have an especially charged duty to make choices for others for the future of their institution, like creating an intense, demanding space for devotion that came with a specific financial cost. As such, interpreting their behaviors, or, at least, assumed historical behaviors according to the mustered evidence, within the lens of RCT may throw some light onto the historical nature of the early Buddhist *saṁgha* in and around Sanchi, albeit with reservations and qualifications.

RCT has been criticized for leading to circular arguments.[607] Since RCT posits that religious actors will all act 'rationally,' then rationality itself must be questioned since different people of different cultures, moral values, backgrounds, etc., may all not

[605] Stark and Finke, *Acts of Faith*, p. 22. To that end, I might cite Stark's earlier work where he clearly stated his intentions: "I am prepared to argue theoretically and to demonstrate empirically that religion affects conformity, not through producing guilt or fear of hellfire in the individual, but that religion gains its power to shape the individual only as an aspect of groups" in Rodney Stark. "Religion and Deviance." In *Crime, Values, and Religion*, edited by James Day and William S Laufer, 111–20, Westport, 1987, p. 112.

[606] As discussed in Chapter 3, repeat donors to both SG1 and SG2 were common. It is unclear if the donors were solicited at their homes or if they made a pilgrimage trip to Sanchi itself.

all view the same action(s) as 'rational.' Put simply, RCT cannot realistically explain the general population of the world at any one time, let alone through all time. One way to temper the imagination produced by the RCT is to recognize its pitfalls, maneuver around them, and finally supplant them when necessary. In behavioral economics, RCT has been recently augmented with the addition of Cumulative Prospect Theory (CPT). Although it would not serve this dissertation to delve deeply into the minutia of behavioral economics, there are several changes that could allow scholars to move forward with economics of religion as a field. CPT emphasizes reference points (such as the context of the data). To use a simple example, winning the lottery for someone who is already a billionaire is much different than it is to someone who is jobless. Moreover, the same lottery winner who is a billionaire might invest those winnings differently and much more conservatively than the jobless winner who will be much more likely to take large risks with the money to get ahead. However, the probability of a billionaire winning the lottery is much smaller than that of someone who is jobless because the jobless persons, who drastically outnumber the number of billionaires, will buy many lottery tickets with hopes of actually winning. Meanwhile, theoretically, the billionaire would have little need to ever purchase a lottery ticket in the first place. Therefore, the jobless individual will actually pay much more in cash and risk larger portions of his or her own money to win the lottery while the billionaire might not ever spend any money whatsoever on a lottery ticket because such an endeavor would, in the end, be pointless for him. The reference point, then, is key for the context.

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[607] Grace Davie. *The Sociology of Religion*, Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2007, p. 81.

RCT, for better or worse, may be fetishized to the point where it is no longer useful. On the other hand, it may be deployed far too frequently which could make its queries fruitless. A tempered, modern approach using what Iannaccone and Bose call "Religious Finance"[608] is probably a suitable methodology to examine in order to study the material support used to sustain formal religious institutions. Iannaccone and Bose's "general theory of religious finance" observes several factors that "shape the economic activities of religious firms" which for lack of a better label they call churches, which includes churches of all sizes with reference to non-Christian 'churches' such as synagogues, mosques, and temples. These factors are government, production, beliefs, and competition. Not all these factors are relevant at any given time, but depending on the data and its context, may be present. RCT tends to focus primarily on the microeconomics of human behavior which lends itself to analyses of production, such as goods and services. To sidestep RCT, a broader focus could be employed.

Iannaccone and his colleagues are in the midst of trying to forge an economics of religion field whereby models of religious markets can finally move past Adam Smith's classical contrast between monopoly churches and competing, individual sects.[609] In medieval Europe, the Catholic Church monopolized the religious marketplace while in the modern culture of the United States competing groups each take a piece of the pie, some more than others. While these two classic structures are eternally useful and cannot be ignored, Iannoccone and his colleagues posit a third market structure. The "neutral

[608] Laurence Iannaccone, and Feler Bose. "Funding the Faiths." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Economics of Religion*, edited by Rachel McCleary, 323–42, Oxford, 2011.
[609] Adam Smith. *An Inquiry Into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. 6 ed. Book V, Article III, London: Strahan Books, 1791.

nexus" model opposes the old models and was recently employed in analyzing ancient Delphi of Greece.[610] In the model, autonomous "polities" share a common culture, economic ties, and sometimes depend on each other for defense, as the ancient Greeks did. A mutual advantageous equilibrium comes into being when none of the autonomous polities can stand against an alliance of the others. A neutral nexus, therefore, becomes special in that it functions as a hub for aggregating and disseminating information.[611]

By analyzing Oracular inquiries by time and topic, the authors argued that by the 7th century BCE, Delphi came to function as the premier example of such a place. The Oracle at Delphi became a place, for nearly 400 years, to resolve conflicts and legitimate policies all while being mutually sustained by the autonomous polities. The sacred sanctuary existed beyond their individual boundaries until it fell victim to its own success and fell under the power of centralized authorities and invaders. Their conclusion was that sacred space could frequently be socially constructed as much as it can be constructed based on supernatural claims.[612] This means that *all places* are potentially sacred but the actual location of major shrines and sanctuaries, according to their data, "is largely determined by social, political, and economic conditions. Thus the central problem of sacred geography is *coordination* rather than *inspiration.*"[613] In moving beyond Adam Smith, finally, a micro-oriented approach towards studying economic markets could incorporate the transmission of religious beliefs in a diverse set of historical models.

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[610] Laurence Iannaccone, Colleen E Haight, and Jared Rubin. "Lessons From Delphi: Religious Markets and Spiritual Capitals." *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization* 77 (2011): 326–38.
[611] Iannaccone, "Lessons From Delphi: Religious Markets and Spiritual Capitals," pp. 330-331.
[612] Iannaccone, "Lessons From Delphi: Religious Markets and Spiritual Capitals," p. 327.

As it pertains to the subjects of this chapter, namely the Goti family as it existed in central India in the last few centuries BCE, Iannaccone's third market structure, that of the neutral nexus model, potentially describes the structure in play at Sanchi. The material support for *stūpa* construction (and eventually all types of permanent Buddhist structures, whether they were monasteries, temples, or otherwise) came from a diverse array of individual, autonomous monastic "polities." Sanchi's hilltop may have functioned as a kind of micro-Delphi, as it served as the premier location for sustained, continued financial support amongst *public* Buddhist ritual spaces for Buddhist adherents in the Malwa region, at least as far as we can tell utilizing available evidences. I argue that the reason Sanchi was able to occupy this very special space was because it was also the featured burial ground for some of the entire region's charismatic leaders: the Goti "entrepreneurs" who helped transform Buddhism into a financially savvy, self-sustaining institution.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I used the lens of charismatic entrepreneurship to frame a discussion pertaining to one familial group. I borrowed this particular lens from new research being done on the historical development of New Religions in Japan during the last two centuries. Such a perspective allows the exploration of the burgeoning early Buddhist institution that focuses on individual agents and their quest for legitimacy, both personally and religiously. My profit-oriented lens attempts to locate the economics of religion within early Indian Buddhism. I believe the strength in centering on the development of the institution based on financial records (as pitifully brief as they might

[613] Iannaccone, "Lessons From Delphi: Religious Markets and Spiritual Capitals," p. 337.

be in most cases) rests in its ability to explain the routinization of charisma whereby a new leader or group of leaders inherits the intangible power of the religion's founder. Weber offered several types of routinization categories, of which some do indeed describe the agents presented here. Nevertheless, I hypothesize that there is another category rooted in an economic impulse. The lynchpin for this transference of charisma rests in the struggle to achieve a financially healthy institution that survives beyond the founder, or in our case, the new charismatic entrepreneur. In the case of the Gotiputas, or those like them, their charisma was incorporated into the *saṁgha* which revolutionized the business of Buddhism during the last century BCE and heading into the Common Era. The transition into long-form donative inscriptions represents a culmination of the new authority. To summarize, the evidence from this chapter may be arranged chronologically:

(2nd c. BCE)

A number of members of the Gotiputas populated a number of high-profile positions of power throughout the Gangetic Plain at Mathura, Bharhut, and Kosambi.

(Late 2nd c. BCE)

One Gotiputa became a famous and influential Buddhist monastic teacher. He was either from or ended up living in the Sanchi vicinity and was an integral part of the *saṁgha*. Eventually, he was enshrined, along with some of his pupils, in *stūpa*-s for veneration.

(Early 1st c. BCE)

Successors and distant relatives of the Sanchi Gotiputa assume positions of power inside and outside the *saṁgha*. The monastic teaching lineage continues. Isolated Buddhist sites experiment with a long-form patronage formula as seen at Mawasa.

(Mid 1st c. BCE)

The short-form style donative inscription was codified into a distinct formula. Hundreds of donors' gifts were recorded in stone (SG1).

(Late 1st c. BCE)

A second generation of donors' gifts were recorded in stone (SG2). In this generation of donors were many more wealthy elites and others from new nodes within the patronage network.

(Early 1st c. CE)

Sanchi's *toraṇa*-s were erected. Recorded gifts to the *saṁgha* were mostly from wealthy elites. Imprecatory inscriptions were added to the stone work, warning future thieves to not disturb the *ācariya-kulaṁ* ('House of the Teachers') or suffer the Five Sins.

(Mid 1st c. CE and beyond)

The long-form donative formula becomes the standard as gifts to Buddhist *saṁgha*-s all over South Asia begin to display only the most substantial donations. Gotiputas no longer appear in the extant epigraphic record. Buddhism spreads along the silk routes to Central Asia and China. Sanchi adds more monuments.

CHAPTER 5

PERSPECTIVES ON WEALTH AND ECONOMICS IN PĀLI BUDDHISM

5.1 OVERVIEW

In the previous chapter, I constructed a history of the Gotiputa group, whom I view as representative of Buddhist elites during the Early Historic Period. In Chapter 3, I analyzed and discussed the impact of the advent of writing in the form of short donative inscriptions. Now, I wish to explore another major feature of the emerging Buddhist *saṁgha*: social complexity. The avenue in which I aim to extract evidence for social complexity is through an examination of the institution's perspectives on wealth. Wealth is a key ingredient for social complexity because it sustains order and legitimacy (two of the three ideologies of "High Culture").[614] Elites, like the Gotiputas, use wealth in a variety of ways. Sometimes wealth is put on display in the form of exotic goods[615],

[614] Mary Van Buren, and Janet Richards. "Ideology, Wealth, and the Comparative Study of 'Civilizations'." In *Order, Legitimacy, and Wealth in Ancient States*, edited by Janet Richards and Mary Van Buren, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 3.
[615] Mary W Helms. *Craft and the Kingly Ideal*, Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1993.

sometimes it is used to govern and rule a body of land,[616] or, perhaps most frequently, it is used as a expression under which order is maintained.[617]

I build on that notion by exploring some early Buddhist literature written in Pāli.[618] I survey the texts, beginning with the Vinaya for monks and ending with the *Nikāya*-s, to dig into perspectives towards wealth as found in the extant canonized literature and complement my detailed original research into Buddhist epigraphy found in Chapters 3 and 4. I seek to analyze the literature as reflective of sentiments towards wealth and economics from the elite monastics themselves—and even though their own rules are restrictive, the wisdom elucidated in the Sutta-Piṭaka is much more favorable for the laity, which in turn helps the monastics by formulating a symbiotic relationship. The Pāli literature provides some historical bookends to the overarching project at Sanchi.

Found in the texts are rules, exceptions to those rules, teachings on micro and macro economic habits, and personalized advice from the Buddha on how to preserve wealth for the sake of accumulate more wealth that is both tangible (like coined money) and intangible (like spiritual wisdom). The goal is to present a narrative of a process that must have taken centuries to actually come into fruition. The narrative sees the Buddhist institution grow from a small band of monks living on basic necessities to living in fully

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[616] Yoffee, *Myths of the Archaic State*, is replete with examples of how order, legitimacy, and wealth together form an ideology of domination at the state level.

[617] Archaeologists are hard-pressed to equate material wealth directly with status, see George L Cowgill. "Social Differentiation at Teotihuacan." In *Mesoamerican Elites*, edited by D Chase and A Chase, 206–20, Norman, 1992, but Arjun Appadurai. "Introduction." In *The Social Life of Things*, edited by Arjun Appadurai, 3–63, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986 has shown that differential access to commodities is a major factor in embodying power.

[618] For the purposes of this dissertation, I view the Pāli canon as orally transmitted until approximately the 1st century BCE when it may have been written down in Sri Lanka (and then continually orally transmitted). See Heinz Bechert. "The Writing Down of the Tripiṭaka in Pāli." *Wiener Zeitschrift Für Die*

realized monasteries that facilitated settled monasticism whereby the renounced monks and the laity maintain a working business partnership for their mutual benefit.[619]

I hope to provide evidence to answer the question of how the Buddhist institution viewed wealth and money and why this might have been an important topic to consider when compiling the Pāli canon. Contrary to many perceptions, the Buddha as portrayed in the texts was not against wealth at all—and indeed deplored poverty for the laity. My conclusions will suggest that the development of institutional complexity coincides with the development of societal complexity in South Asia.

Many early Buddhists texts, especially those with strong narratives flush with iconic characters, descriptions of places and things, and the sentiments of those places, like the *Jātaka*-s, yield considerable detailed information that can be used to study history's difficult subjects, namely attitudes towards important topics like warfare or wealth, political and economic structures, and the relationships between people, families, and groups (which might include entire *gotra*-s or even mercantile guilds). Traditionally, scholars have used these texts alone to describe these subjects without consulting external evidence. Too often, as Schopen has shown, texts belonging to different periods and even regions are deployed to fill in the gaps for other periods. For instance, the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya (MSV), which is almost certainly a Common Era document

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Kunde Südasiens 36 (1992): 45–53. Even after it may have gotten written down, more was added later. See Oskar von Hinüber. *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, New York; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996, pp. 8-22.

[619] Findly has called this a "contract" with constant negotiations in the name of *dāna*. Her book is undoubtedly an excellent starting point for this conversation. See Findly, *Dāna*, particularly p. 3. She said, "This emergent contract between donors and renunciants is a prime example of the Buddhist posture of accommodation because the transactions of giving and receiving are honed continually for precision and efficacy… Such connections make the young religion an especially competitive one among its sectarian

with older layers, as vast as it is, probably has little to offer historians studying society at the time of the historical Buddha. Major attempts to project the MSV's contents backwards would result in a severely anachronistic study. That being said, it is not impossible that at least portions of the MSV itself were composed or conceived of during much earlier than the Common Era. Undoubtedly, the intertextuality between something as enormous as the MSV and earlier canonical texts is itself a work of historical importance. In an attempt to err on the side of caution, in this chapter I deliberately restrict my study of wealth and economy to what may be described as early Pāli Buddhism,[620] namely what scholars envision could be the 2nd century BCE onwards.[621] Doing so grants me access to some prevalent sentiments existing in Mainstream Buddhism during the last few centuries Before the Common Era.

5.2 MONASTIC BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVES

Throughout the Pāli canon, certain topics and themes serve as proxies for wealth, prosperity, and success. Functioning as symbols, these discussions are perhaps the most effective avenue available to explore the texts' perspectives on wealth since the Buddha is often coy about speaking directly about money matters, namely business and its day to day concerns, especially as it pertains to the *saṁgha* itself. As Findly has suggested,

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rivals as it, unlike most of them, takes seriously the need for material support and the complexity of guaranteeing its physical continuation over time."

[620] A larger project might involve a broad survey of attitudes towards wealth as they appear in other Classical Indian texts, such as the Arthaśāstra, Dharmaśāstra, or even the Sinhalese chronicles.

[621] Dating the Pāli Canon is difficult. Doing so is not my intention here. However, von Hinüber roots Pāli in a western Indian Prakrit based on the "rough linguistic map" created by the Aśokan inscriptions in the 3rd century BCE. He states that, "certain eastern features embedded in Pāli point to the fact that the texts have been recast from an earlier eastern version into their present western linguistic shape." The conclusion, then, is that the Theravāda canon is a result of a "lengthy and complicated development" that by no means

much of the time in the literature, whether it is a Vinaya or *Sutta* passage, wealth is not the problem or even the issue at hand but rather, it is "clinging to or casting off of [wealth or money] that makes the difference."[622] Therefore, the investigation of wealth is simultaneously an investigation of the negotiation between a renunciant or layman and his or her attachment to his or her own prosperity and materiality.

The rules studied below, primarily found in the Pāṭimokkha, are presented as normative prescriptions. However, it is unclear how closely they were followed and how often their exceptions (*anāpatti*-s) were invoked, legally (according to the text) or illegally. In the modern era, from my experience living inside a modern functioning Theravādin *vihāra,* rules pertaining to money are frequently broken by the monastics usually for the sake of ease. Further, often donations, specifically cash donations, were simply not allowed to be refused in public because it would be disrespectful to the donor. Only at formal ceremonies did I witness a lay attendant receive gifts on behalf of the monks. Every other time monks (and nuns, although the number of vows they had actually taken was deliberately obscured) received the gift directly into their own hands. In the marketplace, monks (and nuns) would carefully take out paper cash from their robes and hand it to the shop-keeper in exchange for a good.

Legally, there may also be some debate as to when a rule could be broken and how applicable the rule might be in any given circumstance. Gregory Schopen has argued that

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should be taken lightly. See Oskar von Hinüber. *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, New York; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996, pp. 4-5.

[622] Findly, *Dāna*, p. 11.

the Sanskrit *Prātimokṣa* for the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya was little more than 'fatherly advice.'[623] He said,

> In fact we do not know for sure if in the early days the *Prātimokṣas* were ever—apart from liturgical contexts—used without their *Vibhañgas*. It is at least hard to imagine that their rulings were ever actually applied without interpretation or discussion. But even if the *anāpattis*—the exemptions, exclusions, extenuations—turn out to be later additions, that will make them not less, but even more important for tracking the development and gradual maturation of Buddhist monastic rules.[624]

Later, he implies that the Vinaya, being a "very sophisticated system of thought that works from a particular and precise definition of terms"[625] mandated an "old commentary" to be embedded into the *Vibhaṅga* because it was, to quote K. R. Norman, "really an analysis of words (*pada-bhājanīya*)"[626] to elucidate meaning where there was only confusion.

According to Norman, it is possible that some stories in the Pāli Suttavibhaṅga "were invented or borrowed from other sources to explain rules which already existed." He continues, "[t]he nature of the *Pācittiya* rules suggests that this group as a whole was a later addition to the code…" and that "many sub-rules are laid down without reference to him…perhaps [because] they were promulgated by some of his chief followers, or even added after his death."[627] In other words, the rules as we have them presently, are deliberately layered in order to bring clarity. However, even with these layers, the rules are still frequently broken or their exceptions invoked improperly. Schopen's 'fatherly

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[623] Gregory Schopen. "The Good Monk and His Money in a Buddhist Monasticism of 'the Mahāyana Period'." *The Eastern Buddhist* 32, no. 1 (2000), p. 101.
[624] Schopen, "The Good Monk and His Money in a Buddhist Monasticism of 'the Mahāyana Period'," pp. 101-102.
[625] Schopen, "The Good Monk and His Money in a Buddhist Monasticism of 'the Mahāyana Period'," pp. 102.
[626] K R Norman. *A History of Indian Literature: Pāli Literature.* Edited by Jan Gonda. Vol. 7, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1983, p. 19.
[627] Norman, *A History of Indian Literature*, p. 19.

advice' may be too critical of an opinion but might not also be too far from the truth in practice. Presented below are six examples from the Pāli Vinaya that outline the basics for life inside the *saṁgha* as a renunciant. They may or may not accurately reflect life in an everyday Theravāda monastery contemporary or ancient—however, they do reflect an ideal of how monks "should live" while "how they actually did live…can be learned from the interpretation of the rules."[628]

I chose to utilize the Pāli canon for several reasons. First, it is "complete" and thus a body of work that we know much about, so therefore we can be transparent about its limitations (but also strengths). Second, many portions such as the Pāṭimokkha can be identified as "early" and thus can give us a glimpse into some Buddhist thought that could have been relatively concurrent with Sanchi. Next, many Sanskrit sources are incomplete and also suffer from the exact same problems as the Pāli sources, so I do not feel that they are "better" for any particular reason, except for, maybe, that they were partially composed in a geographically closer region. My ability to work in Tibetan or Chinese is limited and therefore not sophisticated enough to undergo a rich study of certain texts. There is a very lengthy history of using/studying Pāli that's both problematic but also detailed. We know a lot about the Pāli canon compared to many other textual sources.[629]

"For His Belly's Sake"

[628] Oskar von Hinüber. "Everyday Life in an Ancient Indian Buddhist Monastery." *ARIRIAB* 9 (2006), p.19.
[629] One future avenue I may take to add to the content of this chapter is to sift through the very rich corpus of Jātaka tales, especially since many are present at Sanchi in a variety of images. Comparing and contrasting Jātaka imagery in both image and text is a worthwhile pursuit by itself. However, for the sake of identifying attitudes towards wealth and economics, very likely only the textual accounts add insight.

The Vinaya's *Mahāvagga Mahākhandhaka* contains an excellent starting point for the discussion of wealth inside and outside the Vinaya. There, the *Paṇāmitakathā* ('On Dismissal') section describes a situation that led the Buddha to explain the four *nissaya*-s ('resources') of a monk, namely *piṇḍiyālopabhojana* ('meal scraps'), *paṁsukūlacīvara* ('robes made of rags'), *rukkhamūlasenāsana* ('lodging at the foot of a tree'), and *pūtimuttabhesajja* ('cattle urine as medicine'). The story follows a *brāhmaṇa* who wishes to become a monk but does so for the wrong reasons:[630]

> Now at that time in Rājagaha a succession of meals of sumptuous foods came to be arranged. Then it occurred to a certain brahmin: "Now, these recluses, sons of the Sakyans, are pleasant in character, pleasant in conduct; having eaten good meals they lie down on beds sheltered from the wind. What now if I should go forth among these recluses, sons of the Sakyans?" Then that brahmin, having approached (some) monks, asked for the going forth. The monks allowed him to go forth (and) they ordained him.
>
> The succession of meals dwindled away after he had gone forth. Monks spoke thus: "Come along now, your reverence, we will walk for almsfood." He spoke thus: "Your reverences, I did not go forth for this—that I should walk for almsfood. If you will give to me, I will eat, but if you will not give to me, I will leave the Order."
>
> "But, did you, your reverence, go forth for your belly's sake?"
>
> "Yes, your reverences."
>
> Those who were modest monks looked down upon, criticised, spread it about, saying: "How can this monk go forth in this *dhamma* and discipline which are well taught for his belly's sake?" These monks told this matter to the Lord. He said:
> "Is it true, as is said, that you, monk, went forth for your belly's sake?"
> "It is true, Lord."
> The enlightened one, the Lord rebuked him, saying:
> "How can you, foolish man, go forth in this *dhamma* and discipline which are well taught for your belly's sake? It is not foolish man, for pleasing those who are not (yet) pleased, nor for increasing (the number of) those who are pleased." Having rebuked him, having given reasoned talk, he addressed the monks, saying:

[630] From Vin I 57-58. Translation is from http://suttacentral.net but is only slightly changed from what was originally published by Horner in 1938. For the translation, see Horner, *The Book of the Discipline*, pp. 504-505. I found no further need to emend the translated text from Pāli. This also represents my general presentation of Pāli texts throughout the chapter unless otherwise specified. I will only provide my own translations when I disagree with Horner's or when I discuss certain terms in greater detail.

> "I allow you, monks, when you are ordaining, to explain four resources: that going forth is on account of meals of scraps; in this respect effort is to be made by you for life. (These are) extra acquisitions: a meal for an Order, a meal for a special person, an invitation, ticket-food, (food given) on a day of the waxing or waning of the moon, on an Observance day, or the day after an Observance day. That going forth is on account of rag-robes; in this respect effort is to be made by you for life. (These are) extra acquisitions: (robes made of) linen, cotton, silk, wool, coarse hemp, canvas. That going forth is on account of a lodging at the root of a tree; in this respect effort is to be made by you for life. (These are) extra acquisitions: a dwelling-place, a curved house, a long house, a mansion, a cave. That going forth is on account of ammonia as a medicine; in this respect effort is to be made by you for life. (These are) extra acquisitions: ghee, fresh butter, oil, honey, molasses."[631]

The hungry *brāhmaṇa* who wished to partake in the luxuries of the *saṁgha* illustrates a crucial point in discussing wealth and prosperity in early monasticism: luxury is not recommended for renunciants because it is easy to become attached to the convenience and pleasure of the luxury. Even though the Buddha eventually relaxes his position on the four *nissaya*-s, such as, for example, eventually allowing more elaborate dwelling-places (and dwellings), they serve as a purpose as exemplary ideals to strive for. Food in this story is a proxy for wealth. Since food is the sustenance of life, having enough nutrition

[631] Edition is from the PTS. Since here the Pāli is both not essential to the story and also too long to include in the body of the text it is presented here instead for reference:
Tena kho pana samayena rājagahe paṇītānaṃ bhattānaṃ bhattapaṭipāṭi aṭṭhitā hoti. Atha kho aññatarassa brāhmaṇassa etadahosi—"ime kho samaṇā sakyaputtiyā sukhasīlā sukhasamācārā, subhojanāni bhuñjitvā nivātesu sayanesu sayanti. Yannūnāhaṃ samaṇesu sakyaputtiyesu pabbajeyyan"ti. Atha kho so brāhmaṇo bhikkhū upasaṅkamitvā pabbajjaṃ yāci. Taṃ bhikkhū pabbājesuṃ upasampādesuṃ. Tasmiṃ pabbajite bhattapaṭipāṭi khīyittha. Bhikkhū evamāhaṃsu—"ehi dāni, āvuso, piṇḍāya carissāmā"ti. So evamāha—"nāhaṃ, āvuso, etaṃkāraṇā pabbajito piṇḍāya carissāmīti. Sace me dassatha bhuñjissāmi, no ce me dassatha vibbhamissāmī"ti. "Kiṃ pana tvaṃ, āvuso, udarassa kāraṇā pabbajito"ti? "Evamāvuso"ti. Ye te bhikkhū appicchā … pe … te ujjhāyanti khiyyanti vipācenti—"kathañhi nāma bhikkhu evaṃ svākkhāte dhammavinaye udarassa kāraṇā pabbajissatī"ti.
Te bhikkhū bhagavato etamatthaṃ ārocesuṃ … pe … "saccaṃ kira tvaṃ, bhikkhu, udarassa kāraṇā pabbajito"ti? "Saccaṃ, bhagavā"ti. Vigarahi buddho bhagavā … pe … kathañhi nāma tvaṃ, moghapurisa, evaṃ svākkhāte dhammavinaye udarassa kāraṇā pabbajissasi. Netaṃ, moghapurisa, appasannānaṃ vā pasādāya pasannānaṃ vā bhiyyobhāvāya … pe … vigarahitvā … pe … dhammiṃ kathaṃ katvā bhikkhū āmantesi— "anujānāmi, bhikkhave, upasam-pā-dentena cattāro nissaye ācikkhituṃ—piṇḍi-yālopa-bhoja-naṃ nissāya pabbajjā, tattha te yāvajīvaṃ ussāho karaṇīyo; atirekalābho—saṃghabhattaṃ, uddesabhattaṃ, nimantanaṃ, salākabhattaṃ, pakkhikaṃ, uposathikaṃ, pāṭipadikaṃ. Paṃsu-kūla-cīvaraṃ nissāya pabbajjā, tattha te yāvajīvaṃ ussāho karaṇīyo; atirekalābho—khomaṃ, kappāsikaṃ, koseyyaṃ, kambalaṃ, sāṇaṃ, bhaṅgaṃ. Rukkha-mūla-se-nāsa-naṃ nissāya pabbajjā, tattha te yāvajīvaṃ ussāho karaṇīyo; atirekalābho—vihāro, aḍḍhayogo, pāsādo, hammiyaṃ, guhā. Pūti-mutta-bhesaj-jaṃ nissāya pabbajjā, tattha te yāvajīvaṃ ussāho karaṇīyo; atirekalābho—sappi, navanītaṃ, telaṃ, madhu, phāṇitan"ti.

to live, grow, and engage in leisure pursuits is essential. Almost always in ancient society, especially India during the Early Historic Period when an agricultural surplus was just beginning to pay dividends, food surpluses are an indicator of power. For the *brāhmaṇa*, he was attracted to that power in the form of consistent food allowed to him by simply taking a vow to become part of the institution.

Findly has argued that the story of the hungry *brāhmaṇa* illustrated how worldly items imbued with satisfaction or even pleasure may interfere with the process of renunciation.[632] As shown throughout this chapter, the ascetic ideal present in early Buddhist monasticism may not have always been as strong as it was during the time of the Buddha since the day-to-day requirements of living life in urban/suburban ancient India were demanding and changing. Urbane life in the growing society is simply too complex to live on such simple, idealistic terms not only because of the growing competition for patronage but also because non-monastics may have become more intrusive into the *saṁgha*'s operations since the monks and nuns were a key source of merit, spiritual guidance, and performers of life-cycle ceremonies. To compensate for the complexity of life as an institution, with time, the *saṁgha* adapts its rules and regulations to survive within the contemporary world whereby wealthy patrons offer generous support and monastics need day-to-day subsistence that is not often readily available inside the monastery walls and obtainable only through purchasing, with money, the necessary goods.

[632] Findly, *Dāna*, p. 11. Later, she discussed how important food was for Buddhist renunciants because it supports the body and maintains strength. Thus, the story of the hungry *brāhmaṇa* exemplifies the temptation of food since it can encourage the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) but also support the seven limbs of

Allowance for a Veyyāvaccakara

Rules in the *Pāṭimokkha* are broken down into four basic sections: the frame-story (sometimes called the introductory story) for the rule, the ruling itself as it comes from the Buddha's mouth, a word-commentary, and, lastly, a (usually) small list of exception-clauses, called *anāpatti*-s (literally 'non-offense'). The intro stories, word-commentary and the *anāpatti*-s are part of some later addition to the text but are now contained within the canon itself. However, even many frame-stories for the rules could potentially have been later additions to the rule itself, providing context to make it a relatable piece of text. A relative chronology of the rules may be hypothesized, from earliest to latest,[633] as: 1.) the original rule (possibly from the Buddha himself); 2.) the frame-story (possibly added by a monastic redactor some time around the First Council after the Buddha's death); 3.) the auto-commentary including the word definitions and the *anāpatti*-s.[634] The amount of emendation to the text at the time of compilation of the entire Pāli canon (probably in the 1st century BCE or slightly later) is unknown, although it is possible to trace the differences in the *Pāṭimokkha* rules through their existence in Vinayas from other schools. Given the degrees of similarity between the rules and indeed the Vinayas, it is probable that there was an original set of rules enumerated by a single source, which historically would be the Buddha.

Many of the rules in the *Pāṭimokkha* are short and simple but complicated by the possible exceptions to the spoken rule. The *Pāṭimokkha* has been long accepted as one of

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wisdom (*bodhi*). She suggested that "if the brahmin-turned-monk [had] known more about the uses of food in the spiritual quest, he would have been better off…" (p. 127).

[633] The *anāpatti*-s are later than even the word-commentaries according to Petra Kieffer-Pülz. "Stretching the Vinaya Rules and Getting Away with It." *The Journal of the Pali Text Society* 29 (2007): 1–49, particularly p. 20.

the earliest layers[635] within the Pāli canon and it is easy to see why relative dating works since the canon itself contains multiple layers that display continuity in thought and evolution of concept. To begin, I point to *Nissaggiya Pācittiya* rule 10 in the *Cīvaravagga* of the *Mahāvibhaṅga*.[636]

The rule concerns the relationship between monastics and money and is called *Rājasikkhāpada* because the rule is enumerated upon within the context of society's elites, such as royalty, desiring to gift money to the *saṁgha* for a specific cause, namely for new robes. Already, one may see the development of concept between this *Pāṭimokkha* rule and what was presented in the above whereby the Buddha said that monks must live on only the four *nissaya*-s, which included *paṁsukūlacīvara* ('robes made of rags'). The frame story of the rule concerns the monk Upananda who accepted money given by a member of the laity to purchase a robe. The rule itself, while short compared to many *sutta*-s in the *Nikāyas*, is actually one of the lengthiest rules in the *Pāṭimokkha*. The Buddha enunciates the rule in response to Upananda's action:[637]

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[634] Hinüber, *A Handbook of Pāli Literature*, p. 14.

[635] Long ago, Oldenberg called the *Pāṭimokkha* the "earliest specimen of Buddhist Vinaya literature that we possess" because the same rules also appear in the *Suttavibhaṅga*, which had a commentary indicating its later origin. See Hermann Oldenberg. *The Vinaya Piṭakaṁ*. Vol. 1, London: Williams and Norgate, 1974, p. xv-xvi. The discussion is taken up and supported by John C Holt. *Discipline: The Canonical Buddhism of the Vinayapiṭaka*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995, p. 36.

[636] Vin III 220.

[637] "Bhikkhuṃ paneva uddissa rājā vā rājabhoggo vā brāhmaṇo vā gahapatiko vā dūtena cīvara-ce-tāpannaṃ pahiṇeyya—'iminā cīvara-cetā-pan-nena cīvaraṃ cetāpetvā itthannāmaṃ bhikkhuṃ cīvarena acchādehī'ti. So ce dūto taṃ bhikkhuṃ upasaṅkamitvā evaṃ vadeyya—'idaṃ kho, bhante, āyasmantaṃ uddissa cīvara-ce-tāpannaṃ ābhataṃ, paṭiggaṇhātu āyasmā cīvara-ce-tāpannan'ti, tena bhikkhunā so dūto evamassa vacanīyo—'na kho mayaṃ, āvuso, cīvara-ce-tāpannaṃ paṭiggaṇhāma. Cīvarañca kho mayaṃ paṭiggaṇhāma, kālena kappiyan'ti. So ce dūto taṃ bhikkhuṃ evaṃ vadeyya—'atthi panāyasmato koci veyyāvaccakaro'ti, cīvaratthikena, bhikkhave, bhikkhunā veyyāvaccakaro niddisitabbo ārāmiko vā upāsako vā—'eso kho, āvuso, bhikkhūnaṃ veyyāvaccakaro'ti. So ce dūto taṃ vey-yāvac-ca-karaṃ saññāpetvā taṃ bhikkhuṃ upasaṅkamitvā evaṃ vadeyya—'yaṃ kho, bhante, āyasmā vey-yāvac-ca-karaṃ niddisi saññatto so mayā, upasaṅkamatu āyasmā kālena, cīvarena taṃ acchādessatī'ti, cīvaratthikena, bhikkhave, bhikkhunā veyyāvaccakaro upasaṅkamitvā dvattikkhattuṃ codetabbo

> "If a king, a king's employee, a brahmin, or a householder sends a robe fund for a monk by messenger, saying, 'Buy a robe with this robe fund and give it to monk so-and-so,' and the messenger goes to that monk and says, 'Bhante, I have brought a robe fund for you; please accept it,' then that monk should reply, 'We do not receive robe funds, but we do receive allowable robes at the right time.' If that messenger then says, 'Is there anyone who provides services for you?', the monk, if he needs a robe, should point out a monastery attendant or a lay disciple and say, 'He provides services for the monks.' If the messenger instructs that service provider and then returns to the monk and says, 'Bhante, I have instructed the service provider you pointed out; please approach him at the right time and he will give you a robe,' then, if that monk needs a robe, he should approach that service provider and prompt him and remind him two or three times, saying, 'I need a robe.' If he then gets a robe, good. If he does not get it, he should stand in silence for it at most six times. If he then gets a robe, good. If he makes any further effort and then gets the robe, he commits an offence entailing relinquishment and confession. If he does not get a robe, he should go to the owner of that robe fund, or send a messenger: 'Sirs, that monk has not received any benefit from the robe fund you sent for him. May you get back what is yours; may it not be lost.' This is the proper procedure."[638]

This rule introduces the *veyyāvaccakara* ('steward') concept into Buddhist monasticism. The *veyyāvaccakara* here is a lay person[639] responsible for assisting a monk with this peculiar problem (needing to buy a new robe) that would seemingly probably come up nearly daily. Instead of handling the money himself, which we will see below is a violation of another *Pāṭimokkha* rule, the monk entrusts the task to an assistant. It should be noted that this rule is particular only to the *cīvaracetāpannaṁ* ('robe-fund') and that *veyyāvaccakara*-s were not permitted for other tasks. Inevitably, however, later in the *saṁgha*'s life the Buddha was forced to establish a person with the title *kappiyakāraka*,

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sāretabbo—'attho me, āvuso, cīvarenā'ti. Dvattikkhattuṃ codayamāno sārayamāno taṃ cīvaraṃ abhi-nip-phā-deyya, iccetaṃ kusalaṃ; no ce abhi-nip-phā-deyya, catukkhattuṃ pañcakkhattuṃ chak-khat-tu-paramaṃ tuṇhībhūtena uddissa ṭhātabbaṃ. Catukkhattuṃ pañcakkhattuṃ chak-khat-tu-paramaṃ tuṇhībhūto uddissa tiṭṭhamāno taṃ cīvaraṃ abhi-nip-phā-deyya, iccetaṃ kusalaṃ; tato ce uttari vāyamamāno taṃ cīvaraṃ abhi-nip-phā-deyya, nissaggiyaṃ pācittiyaṃ. No ce abhi-nip-phā-deyya, yatassa cīvara-ce-tāpannaṃ ābhataṃ, tattha sāmaṃ vā gantabbaṃ dūto vā pāhetabbo—'yaṃ kho tumhe āyasmanto bhikkhuṃ uddissa cīvara-ce-tāpannaṃ pahiṇittha, na taṃ tassa bhikkhuno kiñci atthaṃ anubhoti, yuñ-jan-tā-yasmanto sakaṃ, mā vo sakaṃ vinassā'ti, ayaṃ tattha sāmīcī"ti.

[638] Translation from Horner, *The Book of the Discipline*, pp. 504-505.

[639] In other scenarios, other monks may serve as *veyyāvaccakara*-s for monks. A famous example is Dabba Mallaputta. However, here, since the ruling and the setup involves a financial transaction with coined money, it is assumed that only a lay person should function as this kind of *veyyāvaccakara* and that another monk would not be suitable since, of course, as we see in the next sections, monks are forbidden from using money.

or 'legitimizer' to assist in carrying out tasks for which a mere *veyyāvaccakara* was not suited.

Jonathan Silk cites the Arthaśāstra as yielding a clue as to how to understand the office of a *veyyāvaccakara*.[640] Throughout the ĀŚ are a host of treasury officers ranging from those who are subordinates to store-keepers to those who cause payments to made and received. In ĀŚ 2.5.18, however, the term *vaiyāvṛtyakara* refers to a generic sales agent whose duties are broad and generic. Olivelle comments that "[i]n the present context, these are probably middlemen who facilitated the theft or embezzlement from the treasury."[641]

Petra Kieffer-Pülz argues that the *veyyāvaccakara*, along with other positions in the monastery such as *ārāmika*-s, were slaves due to their social backgrounds.[642] Due to where the term frequently occurs in the canon and commentaries alongside *ārāmika*, *veyyāvaccakara* was certainly not a monk and was, at the very least, a person who could marry, have children, and engage in the material world in a way that the fully ordained monks could not.[643]

Later within the *vinaya*, however, a technical term is given for such a person that is repeated throughout the breadth of the Tipiṭaka: *kappiyakāraka*. *Kappiyakāraka*-s are 'legalizers' who are not ordained but professionally assigned to deal with these money matters that monks could not.[644] The title of *kappiyakāra*[645] was not very common in both

[640] Jonathan Silk. *Managing Monks,* New York: Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 41.
[641] Olivelle, *King, Governance, and Law in Ancient India*, p. 510.
[642] Kieffer-Pülz, "Stretching the Vinaya Rules and Getting Away with It," pp. 14-15.
[643] Kieffer-Pülz, "Stretching the Vinaya Rules and Getting Away with It," pp. 15-16.
[644] For more, see Kieffer-Pülz, "Stretching the Vinaya Rules and Getting Away with It," pp. 20-21.

the *vinaya* and *sutta* literature, probably indicating that it was not a formalized office until later, even though the concept was known.[646]

Put simply, the position of *veyyāvaccakara* was to make life easier for the monks themselves and to not get into problem areas like Upananda.[647] The *cīvaracetāpannaṁ* is one of the most basic ways the laity may interact with monks and nuns and centers upon the monastic's inability to perform financial transactions. Like a clever businessman, the Buddha in the literature realizes the paradox and opens the doors to allow monastics to participate in the transaction so as to not lose a piece of the patronage pie, so to speak. Donating robes is one matter (which actually has its own kind of festival in modern Theravāda Buddhism) but more often than not patrons may choose to donate money in lieu of not actually having the robes present. In this way, the donation of money functions as a kind of "gift card" which is meant to be used at a future date for a specific purpose.

Offense of Accepting Money

The most fundamental and commonly known monastic rule denying monastics the right to use money directly is found in the *Nissaggiya Pācittiya* section. Once again, the events leading up to the rule involve Upananda who accepts money from a member of the laity in place of alms. The same member of the laity criticizes Upananda for accepting money as if he were not a monk (e.g., as if he were a lay person himself). The Buddha hears

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[645] Schopen interestingly suggests that a *kappiyakāraka* is something like a "proper bondman" in the Mūlasarvāstivādin tradition. See "Doing Business for the Lord." pp. 527–54.

[646] The term does not appear in the Vibhaṅga but does appear in the Khandhaka's Mahāvagga section on medicine. There, in describing allowances for five dairy products and other medicines, the Buddha describes *kappiyakāraka*-s as making life easier for monks on the road when they need to purchase items.

[647] Jonathan Silk cites the Arthaśāstra as yielding a clue as to how to define a *veyyāvaccakara* in *Managing Monks,* p. 41. In *Arthaśāstra* 2.5.18 he says the sense is that of a business or sales agent who assists generally. Olivelle in *King, Governance, and Law in Ancient India*, agrees with Silk's assessment. He writes: "[i]n the present context, these are probably middlemen who facilitated the theft or embezzlement from the treasury" (p. 510).

about Upananda's situation and lays down the rule. Rule 18 clearly forbids a monk from accepting or causing to accept gold and silver:[648]

> "Yo pana bhikkhu jāta-rūpa-rajataṃ uggaṇheyya vā uggaṇhāpeyya vā upanikkhittaṃ vā sādiyeyya, nissaggiyaṃ pācittiyan"ti.
>
> "Whatever monk should take gold and silver, or should get another to take it (for him), or should consent to its being kept in deposit (for him), there is an offense of expiation involving forfeiture."[649]

Within this rule are several interesting words. The compound in question is *jātarūparajataṁ*, which acts grammatically as the object of the sentence for "whatever monk (*yo pana bhikkhu*…). The exact translation of the phrase is gold and silver. The context, as described in the auto-commentary provided after the rule with the word *kahāpaṇa* ('coin'), implies money, specifically coined money, which creates an interesting situation in which a monastic could potentially work around this rule by simply accepting non-coined money or, perhaps, in a sophisticated society, credit. This exception to the rule may be more applicable to modern monastics (as this was explained to me by a modern Theravādin monk who routinely stored cash in his monastic cell).[650]

The causative verb in the rule, *uggaṇhāpeyya*, 'cause (another person) to take,' adds subtle nuance to the rule which makes it even difficult to work around in most daily settings. The position of a *veyyāvaccakara*, explained in the above section, avoids this caveat entirely because the monk himself is never involved directly with the finances but

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[648] Vin III 237.

[649] Horner, *The Book of the Discipline*, p. 536. In the *Bhikkhunī Pātimokkha*, nuns are also disallowed from accepting money in the same manner. See Nissaggiyagiya Pācittiya 21.

[650] At least one scholar is sure that Upananda was aware of the proscription against accepting money. For her, this suggests "that such a proscription predated the actual laying down of the training rule, and was probably operative as a principle common to ascetics." See Bhikkhuni Juo-Hsüeh. "Who Is Afraid of Gold and Silver?." In *Buddhist Studies*, edited by Richard Gombrich and Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, 35–95, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2008, p. 38.

is rather the sole final beneficiary. Causing one to accept money for him and not through the official means as it would be with a *veyyāvaccakara* violates the rule completely. As Schopen[651] once discussed, the same problem exists in the equivalent rule in the Sanskrit Mūlasarvāstivādin *Prātimokṣa*. The verb *udgṛhnīyād* in Sanskrit, which is from the same root as the Pāli *uggaṇhāpeyya*, has a wide range of possible meanings, not one of which means something like 'accept' or 'have,' which would have been a verbal construction from *prati√grah* instead. If the rule has been violated, the improperly obtained coined money was confiscated by the *saṁgha* and may be used only to purchase medicinal items, including butter[652], or ought to be thrown away. Although other Nissaggiyā Pācittiyā rules allow for forfeited items to be returned to the violator, money is cannot be one of these returned items.[653]

Offense of Exchanging Money

Like the acceptance of coined money, the exchange of coined money is also forbidden according to the Buddha. The very next *Nissaggiya Pācittiya* rule 19, forbids transactions involving gold and silver:[654]

> "Yo pana bhikkhu nānappakārakaṃ rūpiya-saṃ-vohāraṃ samāpajjeyya, nissaggiyaṃ pācittiyan"ti.
>
> "Whatever monk should engage in various transactions in which gold and silver is used, there is an offense of expiation involving forfeiture."[655]

[651] Schopen, "The Good Monk and His Money in a Buddhist Monasticism of 'the Mahāyana Period'," p. 102.
[652] Butter is often considered medicinal as it allows fully renounced monks to drink butter-based drink concoctions after midday when they are no longer allowed to accept or eat food. Butter is, of course, a high-caloric food with a considerable amount of fat which assists in staving off hunger. It is common practice in modern monasteries to utilize butter in this way since it "medicinally" cures hunger at night.
[653] Wijayaratna, *Buddhist Monastic Life*, pp. 83-84.
[654] Vin III 239.
[655] Translation from Horner, *The Book of the Discipline*, p. 541.

While straightforward, the compound at the heart of the rule is *rūpiyasaṁvohāraṁ*. *Saṁvohāra* is a business transaction. However, the word *rūpiya* is decidedly different from the word in the previous rule (*Nissaggiya Pācittiya* 18), which was *jātarūparajataṁ*. *Jātarūpa-rajataṁ* is literally translated as gold and silver while *rūpiya* only refers to silver coinage.[656] *Rūpiya* is a rare term in the Pāli Canon. However, *rūpiya-maya* ('made of silver') is much more common and is in direct contrast to the phrase *sovaṇṇa-maya* ('made of gold'). According to Falk, "[u]nlike Iran early historical India did not produce gold coins. For this reason the descriptive term rūpya was soon connected with silver. The earliest evidence of rūpya as a term for money is found in the grammar of Pāṇini."[657] In contrast to *rūpiya* is the word *kahāpaṇa*, meaning a coin. The word *kahāpana* appears very regularly and is usually the word used to refer to money which is to be exchanged. *Kahāpana*-s may have been made of gold, silver, or copper. One last term, *māsaka*, refers to a small coin made of copper.[658] Quite likely, at the time of the rule's creation, gold currency was much rarer than silver coinage and therefore it may be inferred that silver coinage was the common denominator exchanged in the market.[659] Nevertheless, both words, *jātarūpa-rājātaṁ* and *rūpiya*, generally refer to the same thing: money, in whatever denomination.

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[656] See Harry Falk. "Silver, Lead and Zinc in Early Indian Literature." *South Asian Studies* 7 (1991), p. 115.
[657] See Falk,"Silver, Lead and Zinc in Early Indian Literature," p. 115.
[658] For a list and discussion of these coins in Indian history, see Dineschandra Sircar. *Studies in Indian Coins*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1968, particularly pp. 7-10.
[659] Silver, although rarer than gold, was still processed with up to 25% copper and traces of iron, tin, or antimony as a hardening alloy. Falk believes Pāṇini is responsible for the association of rūpya (Pāli *rūpiya*) with money generally since he describes a coin as something *āhata* ('struck at') so that it rūpa ('bears a mark.'). The word, then, according to Pāṇini's formulation refers to a silver coin. Falk "Silver, Lead and Zinc in Early Indian Literature," p. 115.

One major implication of the present rule is what is earned in return for the exchange. Specifically, if money (made of gold or silver) or something made of the same materials as money (such as jewelry) is obtained, then it violates the rule. So it may be said that this rule works as a complement to the previous rule. Here, if a monk exchanges, say, a robe for coined money then it is a violation. There can be no "trading up," so to speak, to obtain a restricted item like money.

Offense of Bartering

Nissaggiya Pācittiya rule no. 20 forbids bartering, namely the buying, selling, or exchange of goods:[660]

> "Yo pana bhikkhu nānappakārakaṃ kayavikkayaṃ samāpajjeyya, nissaggiyaṃ pācittiyan"ti.
>
> "Whatever monk should engage in various kinds of bartering, there is an offense of expiation involving forfeiture."[661]

The primary difference between rule no. 20 and rule no. 19 (above) is the word *kayavikkayaṁ*. The word means trade, which is a different kind of noun from the previous set of rules. Trade, here, is described within the context of another one of monk Upananda's actions. At this time, Upananda was a skilled robe-maker and dyer. He exchanged cloth with another ascetic but then, days later, the wandering ascetic, whose status as a Buddhist is unlikely since he is only called a *paribbājaka*,[662] desired his old

[660] Vin III 241.
[661] Translation from Horner, *The Book of the Discipline*, p. 544.
[662] Most likely the second ascetic was not a Buddhist. Freiberger has shown that *paribbājaka*, especially in the Vinaya, was a generic term for non-Buddhist ascetics. Bhikkhus are hardly ever called *paribbājaka*-s. See Freiberger, Oliver. "Zur Verwendungsweise Der Bezeichnung Paribbājaka Im Pāli-Kanon." [on the Use of the Term Paribbājaka in the Pāli Canon.]." In *Untersuchungen Zur Buddhistischen Literatur II*, edited by Heinz Bechert, Sven Bretfeld, and Petra Kieffer-Pülz, 121–30, Göttingen, 1997.

cloth back. Incidentally, the wandering ascetic had exchanged a particularly costly robe (*mahaggham̐*) that would have lasted a long time because of its quality. Upananda, in essence, bartered up a robe made of lesser quality material for a robe made of better material simply by dying his robe. The Buddha heard about the transaction and that the wandering ascetic desired his old, more expensive robe back. As a result, he lays down the rule.[663]

As seen elsewhere in the Pāli Vinaya, exchanges between monastics were not forbidden. Generally, as long as an actual exchange was made whereby both parties agree on the transaction, robes were allowed to be traded amongst members of the *saṁgha*.[664] Robe exchanges were even allowed between monks and nuns, as seen in Nissaggiya Pācittiya no. 5[665] and no. 25.[666] Additionally, monks were once given permission to exchange a blanket for another item.[667]

Rule no. 20 has a particularly clever *anāpatti* ('exception') which allows for shrewd business transactions to take place under common legal conditions. The Pāli and its translation reads as follows:

> Anāpatti—agghaṃ pucchati, kap-pi-ya-kārakassa ācikkhati, "idaṃ amhākaṃ atthi, amhākañca iminā ca iminā ca attho"ti bhaṇati, ummattakassa, ādi-kammi-kas-sāti.

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[663] The equivalent rule in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya does not refer to unqualified bartering nor does it utilize the word for "all" (*sarva*) to restrict "all bartering." Instead, the same phrase as in the Pāli is used: *nānā-prakāraṁ kraya-vikrayaṁ* ('buying and selling of various sorts.') For Schopen, this dissolves any absolutist application of the rule and allows for monks to buy and sell at will as long as one is not seeking gain (Derge Cha 156.b.3). See Schopen "The Good Monk and His Money in a Buddhist Monasticism of 'the Mahāyana Period'," p. 103.

[664] Although not from the Vinaya, the Buddha and Mahā-Kassapa exchanged robes in SN II 121. There the Buddha traded his old robe for Mahā-Kassapa's new robe.

[665] Vin III 209. From the nun's *Bhikkhunī-vibhaṅga*, nun's were also allowed to exchange robes between each other, just like the monks in their own *Nissaggiya Pācittiya* rule no. 3.

[666] Vin IV 59.

[667] Vin II 174.

> There is no offense if he asks the value, points it out to one who makes it legally allowable, saying: 'This is ours, and we want this and that'; if he is mad, if he is the first wrong-doer.[668]

In this rule, the Buddha is made to include an *anāpatti* pertaining to incidents where bartering is *always* legal. Trading of this kind is legal if and only if the two party's agree on two terms: 1.) the value (*aggham̐*) of the goods; and 2.) have a witness, who is, in this case, called a *kappiyakāraka*, or, following Horner's translation, 'one who makes it legally allowable.' The all-important verb here is *ācikkhati*, which is the simple construction of ā+√khyā, 'to tell, show, relate, describe, etc.' The position of *kappiyakāra* as an official monastic office was probably unknown at the time of the original composition of the Pāli root *Pāṭimokkha*. In other words, the auto-commentary, which is certainly younger than the *Pāṭimokkha* rules themselves, uses a recently established official office (relative to the root text) to re-describe occasions in which bartering was sanctioned.

According to work done by von Hinüber, later commentators (from the 4th or 5th century CE) found a way to nearly reverse the rule's meaning:

> The unknown author(s) of the Samantapāsādikā and possibly already his or their predecessors correctly say when explaining *nānappakārakaṁ: cīvarādīnaṁ kappiyakārakabhaṇḍānaṁ vasena anekavidhaṁ, ten'eva assa padabhājanecīvaraṁ ādiṁkatvā dasikasuttapariyosānaṁ kappiyakārakabhaṇḍaṁ eva dassitaṁ. akappiyakārakabhaṇḍaparivattanaṁ hi kayavikkayasaṅgahaṁ na gacchati*, Sp 799, 23-31 'different things means: because permitted objects such as robes, etc. are manifold, therefore permitted objects are shown in its commentary beginning from the robe ending in the threads of the border (of any garment). For, exchange of objects, which are not permitted, is not covered by 'buying and selling.'[669]

Such an unexpected reversal of the original rule "opens floodgates" to allow the *saṁgha* to "engage in large scale exchange as long as monks do not exchange any of their

[668] Translation from Horner, *The Book of the Discipline*, SuttaCentral, 2014, p. 544.
[669] von Hinüber, "Everyday Life in an Ancient Indian Buddhist Monastery," p. 19.

requisites such as tooth brushes." One example with enormous implications is provided by von Hinüber. If a house owned by a layman resting inside the grounds of a *vihāra* is traded for another piece of property located far away from the *vihāra* then the *saṁgha* could legally actually own land and buildings upon that land. If the monastic administrators were smart in their trades, eventually they may actually be able to increase the overall value of their holdings, like a stock in the modern stock market.[670]

Yasa and the Vesālī Monks

One more Vinaya episode, from the *Cullavagga*,[671] is worthy of mention. The story illustrates the ongoing monastic problem of coined money and how to deal with a group of monks from Vesālī who have misinterpreted the Buddha's *Pāṭimokkha*. The story begins with the monk Yasa, who just arrived at Vesālī after the Buddha's death. In a monastery there, he observes, on the *uposatha* day, that the other monks filled a bronze pot with water and laid it out for all to see, specifically the laity. When lay-followers came along, the monks asked for a *kahāpaṇa* (a square copper coin), half a *pāda* (a coin that is 1/4 the value of a *kahāpaṇa* but double the value of a *māsaka*), and a stamped *māsaka* (a small, low value coin or 'bean' used as a standard value). In return, the monks said "something will be done for the *saṁgha* with regard to [our] requisites (…*parikkhārena karaṇīyan'ti*)." What the monks meant was that a donation of coined money would allow the *saṁgha* to purchase some number of *parikkhāra*-s, or accessories, utensils, apparatuses, equipment, adornments, etc., for the monastery.

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[670] von Hinüber, "Everyday Life in an Ancient Indian Buddhist Monastery" pp. 19-20. von Hinüber's example is intact but I added the reference to the stock market since, to me, such land-trading would be a form of formal investment.

[671] Vin II 296.

The monk Yasa was quick to correct the other monks' message by telling them to the contrary. However, his message was for naught as the lay followers gave the desired coins anyway. Later that night, the monks divided up the coins and told venerable Yasa: "This portion of gold coins is for you, reverend Yasa" ("*eso te, āvuso yasa, hiraññassa paṭivīso'ti*"). Offended by the offer, Yasa responded: "I do not have a need for [any] portion of gold coins, good sirs, [and] I do not consent [to accept][any] gold coins" ("*Natthi me, āvuso, hiraññassa paṭivīso, nāhaṃ hiraññaṃ sādiyāmī'ti*"). The naughty monks of Vesālī decided to lodge a complaint and carry out an act of formal reconciliation (*paṭi-sāraṇī-ya--kammaṃ*) against Yasa for offending a layman.

Realizing the monastic law, Yasa requested a companion monk (as was his legal monastic right) and entered Vesālī to speak with the laity. There he recalled the words of the Buddha, which outlined Four Stains for ascetics and *brāhmaṇa*-s: 1.) alcoholic intoxicants; 2.) sexual intercourse; 3.) consenting to accept gold and silver; and 4.) earning a living through wrong livelihood.

To further buttress his argument, Yasa retold an episode from the Buddha's life. Once, in Rājagaha, members of the king's retinue, in his private quarters, were discussing how gold and silver were allowable for recluses, including the Sakyans. Hearing this, village *gāmaṇi* ('headman') Maṇicūḷaka[672] refuted this claim and sought out the Buddha himself to defend his argument. The Buddha, of course, emphasizes how Sakyan monks are barred, according to monastic law, from accepting or causing to accept gold and silver.

[672] Maṇicūḷaka's story is also told in the Saṁyutta-Nikāya IV 325.

Feeling threatened by Yasa, and his claim that they were not Sakyans (*asakyaputtiya*), the Vesālī monks responded by attempting a formal act of suspension (*ukkhepa-nīya-kam-maṁ*) against him. In response to their formal act, the monk Yasa levitated above the ground and suddenly appeared in Kosambī. There at Kosambī, Yasa brought forth the question concerning the monastic law to a large group of elders.

The rest of the story pertains to the quest to answer the question, which gets ultimately enjoined into *dasavatthu* ('ten points') that the Vesālī monks all consider lawful practice but, in actuality, are controversial and unlawful according to the *Buddhavacana*. By enlisting the assistance of many elders from all over northern and southern India, Yasa is eventually able to seek out an answer. Many elders attempted to weigh in on the *dasavatthu* but in the end only a proper committee of elders from all the directions were able to rule once and for all. After a fierce debate at Vesālī, the committee ruled against the *dasavatthu* ('10 points') of the Vesālī monks. A large recitation of the Vinaya was then held by seven hundred monks and called the *Sattasatī*.

The story of the Second Council, which took place roughly 100 years after the Buddha's death, highlights the ongoing need stemming from within the tradition to consistently return to the Buddha's teachings and rule on monastic law. Even though the Vinaya ruling is simple (as described in the previous sections), the Vesālī monks, sometime after the Buddha's death, found ways to conveniently forget or work around the law, only to be, of course, in the end, be punished.

Several discussion points are worthy of note. First, the monk Yasa is presented as pure and a carrier of the Buddha's teachings while the Vesālī monks are established,

within the story, as schemers who unlawfully expanded their privilege within the laity to gain materially. Interestingly, the Vesālī monks are presented by the author/compiler as genuinely ignorant—even if they are aware of the Vinaya rules, they seem to be convinced that their work-around, namely placing a bronze pot filled with water out in place of their alms bowls, may be an acceptable exception since they did not directly engage with the coins (until later, when they would, in the dark, away from knowing eyes, touch the coins and distribute them). For the Vesālī monks, their goal, as presented in the story, was not abundant luxuries, but mere *parikkhāra*-s, ('requisites'). Although it might be possible for those *parikkhāra*-s to become lavish material items, it seems likely that the monks, who did refer to themselves as Sakyans (as opposed to Yasa, who was not, because of his accusations), were genuinely attempting to earn a daily living and provide sustenance for their monastery (repairs, new robes, etc.). Indeed, they were proven to be wrong-doers within the monastic law, but they are not presented as evil-doers. Rather, I argue, they probably represented an actual historical reality where some monks attempted to bend the law (from their own interpretation of the law) to continue their existence as renunciants.

Second, the sheer breadth of the debate is fascinating since the story illustrates the internal struggle within the *saṁgha* to solve internal problems. Quite quickly, the relatively simple problem of whether *bhikkhu*-s can receive coined money escalates into a massive inquiry into monastic law resolvable only through a coalition of elders from the entire subcontinent. Given the presentation of the story, as told through Yasa's observation about the Vesālī monks accepting coined money, it may be safe to assume

that the scope of the debate is primarily centered on only one of the *dasavatthu* ('ten points'). Resolving the other nine points are only icing on the cake since Yasa's initial problem, that of Buddhist monks accepting coined money in front of the laity, is the one with presumably the most severe consequences.

All in all, the monastic tradition itself recognizes the persistent problem of accepting/not-accepting coined money and uses this story as a way to show how the forefathers of the tradition came to their conclusions. As I argue throughout, the necessity of coined money for the sustainment of the Buddhist institution as it grew in size and influence may align closer to the concerns of the Vesālī monks rather than the idealism of venerable Yasa. To me, Yasa represents the old, world-renouncing early tradition of Buddhism that could survive without direct financial involvement. On the other hand, it is not difficult to see the case of the Vesālī monks as adapting to newer circumstances, even though they are legally wrong-doers (according to the Vinaya) and displayed as ignorant fools (when compared to Yasa).

5.3 LAY BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVES IN THE SUTTA-PIṬAKA

In the above section (5.2), I explored some Pāli Vinaya passages which reflected some ideal perspectives on money for monks. More or less, I attempted to outline normative prescriptions which were often interpreted as semi-fluid categories in order to change with the requirements necessitated by the growth of the Buddhist *saṁgha* as an institution. To supplement this discussion, below I will survey several themes present the Pāli Sutta-Piṭaka to reveal some generalized sentiments on wealth for the Buddhist laity. Deeper discussion on the meaning of these *sutta*-s and their relevance for reconstructing

early Indian Buddhism will be presented afterwards. The themes and their accompanying *sutta*-s given below provide a representative illustration of general sentiments that show how the laity was *supposed* to view wealth, according to the monastic redactors who compiled the Sutta-Piṭaka.

Three major themes run concurrent throughout the Sutta-Piṭaka: 1.) wealth is a useful tool for laypeople to generate happiness (which in turn generates donations for the *saṁgha*); 2.) families and householders need wealth to guard against calamities and problems like lethargy; and 3.) wealth is a barometer for society to gauge its prosperity and its morality (since wealth improperly earned will undoubtedly lead to problems). Even though the Buddha almost never prohibits wealth for the laity and instead promotes wealth as a source of happiness, prosperity, and utility for non-monastics, there is at least one *sutta* which reflects the Vinaya's negativity towards money. Mostly, wealth is discussed as a boon, earned rightfully from previous births, and as a necessity for sustaining generosity (*dāna*) for the Buddhist renunciants. Poverty is maligned because it leads to a host of problems, both for individuals and for society. As with the Vinaya, wealth is frequently depicted not a core problem but rather as a potential pitfall to fall into because of the ease in which man can become overly attached to material things.

Wealth as a Useful Tool

For laypersons, wealth is the invaluable instrument for survival. Generally speaking, wealth provides sustenance, housing, social respect, and protection against misfortune. Many Buddhist sutta-s outline wealth in the same way. In the *Kūṭadanta-sutta*,[673] a

[673] DN I 134-136.

kingdom is slowly succumbing to deviants like thieves. The Buddha presents the alleviation of poverty (meaning the cultivation of wealth) as one tool to solve crime and lawless behavior. In the story, the *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta receives the Khānumata village as a royal gift. The Buddha arrives to the village just in time as Kūṭadanta is preparing for a great sacrifice (*mahāyaññho*) to celebrate his acquisition. Seeing the famous holy man, Kūṭadanta consults the Buddha, asking him what qualities make a sacrifice successful. Before the converting Kūṭadanta, to answer Kūṭadanta's inquiry, the Buddha tells the story of the ancient king Mahā-Vijitāvī and offers advice to Kūṭadanta on the *mahāyaññho*. Mahā-Vijitāvī possessed vast wealth with a full treasury and granary. In private, the king reflected upon his wealth and territories attained from conquest and decided to perform a sacrifice for his own benefit and happiness. Surprisingly, after consulting his court priest (*purohitaṁ*), the king became informed that his kingdom suffered from many ailments stemming from thieves and brigands. The kingdom would surely suffer further pain if the king performed a grand sacrifice as he had planned since the sacrifice would cost a great deal of money and resources.

Instead, the king's attendant convinced the king to eliminate the ailments by investing the kingdom's wealth directly into the kingdom and its people. For farmers, the king distributed grain and fodder (*bījabhattaṃ*). To traders (*vāṇijjāya*), the king gave capital (*pābhataṃ*). To those engaged in government service the king raised their wages to a higher living standard (*bhattavetanaṃ*). As such, the kingdom's prosperity could be restored by eliminating the primary reason for societal problems: poverty and corruption.

Looking at the *purohita*'s conclusion, we see the wisdom of such advice:

> Te ca manussā sakammapasutā rañño janapadaṃ na viheṭhiṃsu, mahā ca rañño rāsiko ahosi. Khemaṭṭhitā janapadā akaṇṭakā anuppīḷā manussā mudā modamānā ure putte naccentā apārutagharā maññe vihariṃsu.[674]
>
> Then those men, following each his own business, will no longer harass the realm; the king's revenue will go up; the country will be quiet and at peace; and the populace, pleased one with another and happy, dancing with their children in their arms, will dwell with open doors."[675]

The king's infusion of money surely is good for the macro-economic condition of the kingdom.

Several Pāli words yield insight into the perspective on wealth with regard to macro-economics of ancient Indian society. The gift of *pābhataṁ* to the *vāṇijja*-s roughly equates to a 'present' (='that which has been brought here'). However, here, I side with Rhys-Davids in taking it broadly as 'capital' since to those involved in the marketplace, namely the *vāṇijja*-s, would benefit most from one or all the following: 1.) actual gifts of money; 2.) relaxed taxation; 3.) elimination of interest on loans. All three would mean something akin to 'capital.' Next, *bhattavetanaṃ*, the word used as the gift to those involved in government service (*rājaporise*), directly refers to wages paid in return for service. Raising salaries, generally speaking, is one common method for actively encouraging people to spend more within the marketplace to boost the economy. Lastly, we see the sentence *mahā ca rañño rāsiko ahosi*, which might be translated as 'the king's revenue became great.' The simple sentence offers us a concise conclusion: investing in the kingdom is really an investment in the king's own wealth in the long run. Therefore, briefly looking at these words we see some evidence as to what a prosperous macro-economic condition might be in ancient India from the perspective of the elite, namely

[674] DN I 136.
[675] Translation of the entire passage comes from T W Rhys-Davids. *Dialogues of the Buddha*. Vol. 2, London: Oxford University Press, 1899, p. 173.

the king. Wealth could be a useful tool for a king to invigorate a kingdom's economy. The implied accumulation and subsequent redistribution of that wealth (for greater personal wealth in the end) is the ultimate *mahāyañño* ('great sacrifice') and benefits king and country alike.[676]

The *Aputtaka-sutta*[677] is a second *sutta* outlining wealth as a useful tool. The *Aputtaka-sutta* comes in the frame story beginning with king Pasenadi. Once when the Buddha was staying at Sāvatthi, king Pasenadi of Kosala visited in the middle of the day. The king was on his return trip from appropriating a deceased *seṭṭhi*'s ('guild foreman') wealth because he was *aputtaka* ('heirless'). Given no legal heir, the man's money and estate (described as *sāpateyyaṃ*), said to be *satasahassāni hiraññasseva* 'one hundred thousand' worth of coins, becomes sent to the royal coffers (*rājantepuraṃ*—literally an inner chamber of the king's). Apparently, though, according to the king, who was commenting on the deceased man's character probably from gossip, the seṭṭhi lived on broken rice and pickled brine, wore only hempen cloth, and rode in a small dilapidated cart with leaves providing shade.

The Buddha calls such men *asappuriso* ('not virtuous') and accuses them of *bhogā sammā apari-bhuñji-ya-mānā parikkhayaṃ gacchanti, no paribhogaṃ*, 'not properly putting to use [his wealth], [which] goes to waste and is not enjoyed.'[678] On the other hand, a *sappuriso* ('virtuous man') who acquires lavish wealth (*uḷāre bhoge labhitvā*),

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[676] Fenn writes that the *sutta* corresponds to simple notions of social justice: "everyone should have sufficient resources to care for themselves and others, and to make religious life possible—and the notion that these values should be incorporated into the political system." See Mavis Fenn. "Two Notions of Poverty in the Pāli Canon ." *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 3 (1996), p. 108.
[677] SN I 89-91.
[678] In this situation, because of the short nature of the few passages I refer to, I have translated them myself.

knows how to properly put his wealth to good use, not let it go to waste, and how to enjoy it.

The crux of the Buddha's argument may be the fact that "putting wealth to good use" is, actually, something very near and dear to the Buddha's own interest: *samaṇab-rāhma-ṇesu uddhaggikaṃ dakkhiṇaṃ patiṭṭhāpeti sovaggikaṃ sukhavipākaṃ sagga-saṃ-vatta-ni-kaṃ*, '[a virtuous man] causes to establish spiritual welfare for *brāhmaṇa*-s and ascetics [with] offerings that result in happiness and lead to heaven.' Thus, financial generosity for the *saṁgha* (and *brāhmaṇa*-s defines a man as *sappurisa* while other men who are *asappurisa* are implied to be selfish and greedy. It was a total waste and implied missed opportunity that the seṭṭhi in this story died heirless since that wealth could have been used for something better that would have had great spiritual implications for that man's inevitable rebirth. Now, because of the man's ignorance, the fortune with incalculable spiritual value, was in the hands of the king. Indeed, the Buddha sought to provide for his institution by attempting to solicit the king and make the most out of an unfortunate scenario.

The *Dīghajāṇu-sutta*[679] contains an instruction by the Buddha to householders about how to conserve and increase their wealth. The *sutta* is very important to my discussion because it is one of the few *sutta*-s where the Buddha buttresses his promotion of wealth for the laity with a careful warning about simultaneously preserving spiritual progress and understanding. Amongst all the *sutta*-s discussed here in this chapter, the *Dīghajāṇu*, at its heart, may contain the most important message simply because it

[679] AN IV 282.

ingeniously integrates a favorable approach to materiality with a quintessential Buddhist philosophical message.

The *sutta* begins, as usual, with a householder named Dīghajāṇu asking the Buddha for a teaching. He describes himself and others like him as encumbered by family, usage of gold and silver, and indulgent in other material items like garlands and perfumes. The Buddha tells him that there are four conditions conducive to worldly satisfaction: 1.) persistent effort; 2.) watchfulness; 3.) good friendship; and 4.) a balance between work and home. According to the Buddha's teaching each of the four conditions may be best taught within an economic context.

Persistent effort is defined as being a businessman endowed with the power of discernment and ability to properly assess methods and means (*tatrupāyāya vīmaṃsāya samannāgato*). Watchfulness is defined as protecting one's wealth (*bhoga*) from the various threats of kings (meaning, probably, taxation or seizure because of something like not having a true heir), bandits, calamities (like fire), or unsuitable heirs. Good friendship is defined as having friends who are trustworthy, virtuous, filled with wisdom, and generous (*dāna*).

The Buddha continues his teaching with a description of four sources of destruction for wealth properly earned: 1.) debauchery; 2.) intoxication; 3.) gambling; 4.) association with wrong-doers. On the other hand, the Buddha presents the avoidance of these four sources of destruction as sources of prosperity.

For future lives, the Buddha continues, there are four conditions which promote favorable future births with an abundance of wealth and happiness: 1.) having *saddhā*

('faith' or 'trust'); 2.) virtue; 3.) generosity (*cāgasampannā* and not *dāna*)[680]; and 4.) wisdom. These lists demonstrate the Buddha's position that wealth properly obtained can be a method to cultivate spiritual values.

The title of one *sutta*, *Ānaṇya*,[681] is properly translated as 'freedom from debts.' The *sutta* contains another list, as is the theme for the *Aṅguttara*. The list in the *sutta* come in the form of a teaching from the Buddha to the householder Anāthapiṇḍika. He tells Anāthapiṇḍika that there are four types of happiness (*sukhaṁ*) achieved by a layperson: 1.) the happiness of ownership; 2.) the happiness of enjoyment; 3.) the happiness of being debt-free; and 4.) the happiness of blamelessness. Each happiness is described as amassing wealth (*bhoga*) righteously through energetic striving and hard work (*uṭṭhā-na-vīriyā-dhi-gatā bāhā-bala-pari-citā sedāvakkhittā dhammikā dhammaladdhā*). In other words, the Buddha views wealth properly earned as wealth providing not only economic stability but happiness and satisfaction with life.[682] Therefore, the Ānaṇya-sutta teaches that wealth may be a tool with which a layperson may access happiness.

Wealth as Necessary for Familial Prosperity

Individual families and not just corporate entities or kingdoms may also benefit from the cultivation of wealth. For families, prosperity is a symbol of success and stability. In the

[680] *Dāna* is usually taken to mean an act of gift giving. *Cāgasampannā* as it is here refers to a virtue.
[681] AN II 69.
[682] A final sutta that shows wealth as a tool is the *Iṇa-sutta* (AN III 352). *Iṇa* as a word means 'debt,' or 'loan' and the sutta is very short and straightforward. The main theme is that debt and poverty are unskillful and dangerous. The Buddha, speaking to his monks, states that poverty and indebtedness are the result of partaking in sensuality. The Buddha finishes the *sutta* with some verses summarizing his position. Poverty and indebtedness may be prevented and alleviated with knowledge of the five hindrances and proper conviction.

famous *Sīgālovāda-sutta*,[683] which gives general advice to the *gahapati* Sigālaka, the Buddha described six vices of conduct, four motives for evil action, six channels for dissipating wealth, and the various kinds of friends. Generally, the theme is proper duty for a layman. However, within the *sutta* is a tiny amount of wise financial advice.

First, the Buddha outlines six ways people commonly squander wealth: 1.) intoxication; 2.) roaming the streets at inappropriate times; 3.) habitual partying; 4.) compulsive gambling; 5.) bad companionship; and 6.) laziness. After this statement, the Buddha goes into depth about each of those problems, breaking down the various dangers inherent in heedlessness caused by each of the above. In his breakdown of the sixth way to squander wealth, laziness, the Buddha aptly posits that,

> Tassa evaṃ kic-cāpa-desa-bahulassa viharato anuppannā ceva bhogā nuppajjanti, uppannā ca bhogā parikkhayaṃ gacchanti.[684]
>
> [If one possesses] an abundance of excuses for not working, new wealth does not accrue and existing wealth goes to waste.

Essentially, the Buddha advocates mindful living and hard work for economic prosperity, singling out the evil that is laziness in particular.

Throughout the *sutta*, the Buddha provides summaries of his teachings in verse. Two verses in particular hint at the Buddha's recommended approach for laypersons seeking to achieve equanimity and prosperity for their families:

> Paṇḍito sīlasampanno,
> jalaṃ aggīva bhāsati.
>
> Bhoge saṃharamānassa,
> bhamarasseva irīyato;
> Bhogā sannicayaṃ yanti,
> vammi-kovu-pacī-yati.

[683] DN III 180-193.
[684] DN III 184.

Evaṃ bhoge samāhatvā,
alamatto kule gihī;
Catudhā vibhaje bhoge,
sa ve mittāni ganthati.

Ekena bhoge bhuñjeyya,
dvīhi kammaṃ payojaye;
Catutthañca nidhāpeyya,
āpadāsu bhavissatī"ti.[685]

The wise endowed with virtue
Shine forth like a burning fire,
Gathering wealth as bees do honey
And heaping it up like an ant hill.
Once wealth is accumulated,
Family and household life may follow.

By dividing wealth into four parts,
True friendships are bound;
One part should be enjoyed;
Two parts invested in business;
And the fourth set aside
Against future misfortunes.

The advice of the Buddha for the *gahapati* Sigālaka indicates that wealth is a necessity for families and should actively be accumulated. Interestingly, the Buddha does not mention, here, anything about supporting ascetics. Elsewhere, the continued support of ascetics, like Buddhist monks who go door to door with their alms bowls, is one of the best endeavors to pursue with wealth. This *sutta*, although not primarily concerned with money or wealth, contains some pithy advice that supports the concept of wealth accumulation as a vital duty for non-renunciants. In short, the *Sigālovāda-sutta* functions as a practical handbook for laypersons with some tenets advocating a pragmatic approach to wealth and money.

Two *sutta*-s[686] in a row describe shopkeepers and equate their behaviors with monks. The Buddha is straight to the point: in the *Paṭahama-pāpaṇika-sutta*, incapable

[685] DN III 188.

shopkeepers (*pāpaṇika*-s) are not able to acquire or increase their wealth (*bhogaṁ*) if they are lazy during the morning, middle of the day, and at night. Similarly, a monk is incapable of achieving anything spiritually if he is lazy during these three times of day. However, if a shopkeeper or a monk is active and diligent during the morning, midday, and evening, then he will achieve his goals. In the *Dutiyapāpaṇika-sutta*, the Buddha continues the lesson: shopkeepers attain vast wealth if they have keen eyes, are responsible, and have benefactors (*nissa-ya-sam-panno*). The Buddha describes benefactors as,

> Idha, bhikkhave, pāpaṇikaṃ ye te gahapatī vā gahapatiputtā vā aḍḍhā mahaddhanā mahābhogā te evaṃ jānanti: 'ayaṃ kho bhavaṃ pāpaṇiko cakkhumā vidhuro ca paṭibalo puttadārañca posetuṃ, amhākañca kālena kālaṃ anuppadātun'ti. Te naṃ bhogehi nipatanti: 'ito, samma pāpaṇika, bhoge karitvā puttadārañca posehi, amhākañca kālena kālaṃ anuppadehī'ti. Evaṃ kho, bhikkhave, pāpaṇiko -nissa-ya-sam-panno hoti.[687]
>
> Here, rich, wealthy, affluent householders and householders' sons know him thus: 'This good shopkeeper has keen eyes and is responsible; he is able to support his wife and children and pay us back from time to time.' So they deposit wealth with him, saying: 'Having earned wealth with this, friend shopkeeper, support your wife and children and pay us back from time to time.' It is in this way that a shopkeeper has benefactors.[688]

In other words, the *nissayasampanno*, 'benefactors', are, in essence, generous lenders. The stipulation, of course, for these benefactors is that they must be paid back 'from time to time.'

On the other hand, a monk will attain vast and wholesome qualities with the exact same three qualities! However, although each of the qualities is topically the same, the definitions for monks are different. For the description of monastic benefactors, the Buddha says,

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[686] AN I 115 and AN I 116.
[687] AN I 117.
[688] Translation from Bhikkhu Bodhi. *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012, p. 214.

> Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu ye te bhikkhū bahussutā āgatāgamā dhammadharā vinayadharā mātikādharā te kālena kālaṃ upasaṅkamitvā paripucchati paripañhati: 'idaṃ, bhante, kathaṃ, imassa ko attho'ti? Tassa te āyasmanto avivaṭañceva vivaranti, anuttā-nīkatañca uttānīkaronti, anekavihitesu ca kaṅ-khā-ṭhāni-yesu dhammesu kaṅkhaṃ paṭivinodenti. Evaṃ kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu -nissa-ya-sam-panno hoti.[689]
>
> "Here, from time to time a bhikkhu approaches those bhikkhus who are learned, heirs to the heritage, experts on the Dhamma, experts on the discipline, experts on the outlines, and inquires: 'How is this, Bhante? What is the meaning of this?' Those venerable ones then disclose to him what has not been disclosed, clear up what is obscure, and dispel his perplexity about numerous perplexing points. It is in this way that a bhikkhu has benefactors.[690]

Interestingly, the Buddha does not describe the '*nissa-ya-sampanno*' the same way, even though he might have since the monastic institution does indeed need benefactors in many of the same ways that a shopkeeper might since both are essentially selling something (goods for the shopkeeper, religion for the monk).

The *Bhoga-sutta*[691] provides us with a clear, simple elucidation of dangers to wealth as a list. The pithy advice may be designed for use by householders, shopkeepers, and rulers alike since the dangers can be usefully interpreted for each context. The list claims that there are five general dangers to one's wealth: 1.) fire; 2.) water; 3.) king; 4.) bandits; 5.) and bad heirs. In contrast, one may protect against those dangers but cultivating five benefits of wealth: 1.) self-maintenance; 2.) filial maintenance; 3.) familial maintenance; 4.) maintenance of friends; and 5.) maintenance of ascetics and *brāhmaṇa*-s. The two lists correlate only in that one theoretically may prevent the other from ever happening. The list is completely stock, and the *sutta* is probably just a quick inclusion to setup other teachings in the same section. Nevertheless, one may think of the list as an adequate summation of the early Buddhist position toward wealth.

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[689] AN I 118.
[690] Translation from Bodhi, *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, p. 215.
[691] AN III 259.

The *Kula-sutta*[692] is a short text dealing with families and wealth more directly. The Buddha says that a family that cannot hold on to their wealth suffers from one of four ailments: 1.) they do not look for lost things; 2.) they do not repair old things; 3.) they consume too much food and drink; and 4.) they do not place a man or woman into authority that has moral virtue. On the other hand, families that do these things hold on to their wealth for a long time. It is implied that the smart families, too, will increase their wealth over the long term by practicing these basic home management skills.

A last *sutta* containing advice for families is the *Ādiya-sutta*,[693] which presents a brief teaching from the Buddha to the householder Anāthapiṇḍika. The Buddha tells him that there are five uses of wealth earned righteously: 1.) he makes his family happy and properly maintained; 2.) he makes his friends and companions happy and properly maintained; 3.) he makes proper arrangements to account for catastrophe such as flooding, fires, taxes, or bandits; 4.) he performs the proper oblations for relatives, ancestors, kings, and deities; and 5.) he offers alms to ascetics and *brāhmaṇa*-s in return for merit conducive to heaven. The Buddha ends the teaching by telling the householder that if one uses their wealth in these five ways then there cannot be any regrets to using the wealth since it will have been used righteously. Again, the Buddha's wisdom on financial planning guards against many of the known pitfalls an economic novice may encounter when spending or investing their money. Lastly, it should be noted, that included within the five uses is generosity (*dāna*), a core value for the symbiotic relationship between the *saṁgha* and laity. Each of the *sutta*-s presented here serve to

[692] AN II 249.

benefit families who are active agents in the economy. The Buddha uses a variety of means to teach methods to put wealth to good use for the sake of the current family unit and all future extended families.

Wealth as a Barometer

Wealth as a tool and as a method for families to achieve economic solvency are two ways the Buddha advertises wealth to the laity. However, a last theme is wealth as a barometer. Wealth may serve as a useful measuring stick for kings (with regard to their kingdoms), for morally just householders who run prosperous businesses, and maybe even for the *saṁgha* itself since it maintains a symbiotic relationship with the laity. In the *Cakkavatti-sutta*[694], an ideal king must keep an eye on the poverty levels within his kingdom since poverty, if kept unchecked, leads to innumerable ills of society, including thievery, a loss of civility, and order. In this context, an impoverished kingdom is unable to support a *saṁgha*. Therefore, it falls upon the king to ensure that his subjects are well taken care of financially and ethically to ensure the symbiotic relationship between the king and his religion.

The *sutta* begins with a teaching from the Buddha. He advocates his monks to "be islands unto yourselves" by practicing meditation and right conduct. This mental state will bring about happiness and many blessings. As an example, the Buddha tells the story of a *cakkavatti* ('wheel-turning king') named Daḷhanemi and his eight successors. Using these kings as examples, the Buddha describes the linkage between kingly virtue and life

[693] AN III 45.
[694] DN III 58-77.

within the kingdom for the subjects. In a sense, the connection is one of cause and effect. Daḷhanemi himself eventually retires to become a *rājisi* ('retired king.') He tells his successor that the title of *cakkavatti* is not inherited but rather earned through living in congruence with *ariya cakkavattivatta* ('Noble Duty of the Wheel Turning King'). By the eighth king in the story, society is on the decline because the current king does not govern according to the *ariya cakkavattivatta* but rather by his own, haphazard code.

This unfortunate eighth king is advised to assist his poor subjects through various social programs but in the end his kingly negligence backfires. After giving money to the poor for welfare programs, the king hears about corruption within every rank in society. He institutes extreme forms of punishment to attempt to curb the ensuing social mayhem but the people of the kingdom riot. The message of this story becomes clear at this point: if left unresolved, poverty will destroy society. Therefore, the theme is that wealth is the barometer for measuring prosperity and contentment within society. Only the ideal king, one who is a *cakkavatti*, may realize this connection and, presumably, take action to nullify poverty before it becomes systemic. Indirectly linked to the socio-economic prosperity of the kingdom is the socio-economic prosperity of the *saṁgha*.

The *Kāmabhogī-sutta*[695] contains another type of barometer. In a teaching to Anāthapiṇḍika the householder, the Buddha lists ten classes of *kāmabhogī*-s ('wealthy people') and each has obtained their wealth by various means, some of which were wrong and some which were righteous. Still yet others, having accumulated wealth, are not generous with their wealth.

[695] AN V 176.

In his presentation of these *kāmabhogī*-s, the Buddha throws favor upon those who have obtained wealth by right livelihood and chastises those who earned it via wrong livelihood. Similarly, he praises the generous but scrutinizes the greedy. Interestingly, the Buddha describes a category of *kāmabhogī* who obtains wealth from a mixture of right and wrong means. Those men are defined by whether they are generous with their wealth, meaning contribute to worthy causes or donate to ascetics. The Buddha's list is a classification scheme that details how the wealthy may or may not be religiously virtuous. The final category, the tenth one, describes the purest *kāmabhogī*. Such a *kāmabhogī* earns his money righteously and considerately, enjoys it properly, shares it generously with others for meritorious acts, but is ultimately not bound to it. In short, it is strongly implied that Anāthapiṇḍika himself is one belonging to that category since Anāthapiṇḍika was one of the most generous and famous donors to the early Buddhist *saṁgha* and therefore the entire *sutta* is seemingly dedicated to appreciating and praising Anāthapiṇḍika. Here, the barometer is not how much wealth nor what you do with it. Rather, the barometer is the ability to disassociate from the wealth that is put to good use.

In the same vein, the *Andha-sutta*[696] is a short and straightforward *sutta* where the Buddha lists three categories of people: 1.) the blind; 2.) the one-eyed; and 3.) the two-eyed. As such, according to one's blindness or number of eyes, one may or may not be able to acquire wealth properly just as one may or may not be able to distinguish between right and wrong livelihoods or virtues. The blind person is presented as a metaphor for being blind to the true nature of the world and is therefore relegated to being both poor

[696] AN I 128.

morally and materially since, according to the Buddha's own teachings, wealth won via unscrupulous means it not wealth worth winning in the first place. Meanwhile, someone with two-eyes will be successful in both material and spiritual pursuits because they are able to properly discern moral from immoral behavior. Anāthapiṇḍika in the *Kāmabhogī-sutta* is one whose eyes are both open.

Wealth as Negative

Unlike the Vinaya, very few *sutta*-s are critical of wealth. However, there is a rare sub-theme that present the accumulation of wealth in a largely negative light. The most obvious of these is the *Upakkilesa-sutta*.[697] The *sutta* is the only story I have found outside of the Vinaya that overtly dismisses the accumulation of wealth (although negative sentiments may be present elsewhere). The negativity towards wealth, however, is directed at monastics rather than lay people.

The Buddha starts with a teaching about obstructions to the sun and the moon, such as clouds, fog, smoke, and dust. In the same way, there are four obstructions to ascetics and *brāhmaṇa*-s. They are: 1.) intoxication; 2.) sexual intercourse; 3.) consenting to accept gold and silver (*eke samaṇabrāhmaṇā jāta-rūpa-rajataṃ sādiyanti*); and 4.) wrong livelihood. This list is not particularly unique nor does is it very different from what has been taught in most other Buddhist sources. Nor is the wording for our "obstruction" very unique as the Buddha uses the stock *jāta-rūpa-rajataṃ* to describe gold and silver, just as in the *Nissaggiya Pācittiya* rule 18. The major take-away from the *sutta* is that the acceptance of gold and silver is linked to over-indulgence with other kinds of material pleasures. As such, the Buddha strongly implies that ascetics and

brāhmaṇa-s who engage in such sense-pleasures will indeed be obstructed from their practices.

Discussion

For the Buddha, wealth is something tangible that represents a number of virtues for the layperson: 1.) hard work; 2.) moral business; 3.) protection for the family; and 4.) the ability to support the *saṁgha*. The Buddha frequently links the acquisition of wealth with the acquisition of morality. Wealth, simply put, is a direct result of righteous behavior. The *Nikāya*-s are replete with economic discussions establishing that wealth is better than poverty. Additionally, many economic metaphors reveal an early Buddhist *saṁgha* that knew the power of wealthy laypeople as they relate to the religious institution financially. The Buddha sets up a give-and-take relationship with the wealthy laity: the *saṁgha* does not chastise their material earnings if the laypersons are somewhat generous with sharing their material earnings. In return, the wealthy laity, of course, receives a spiritual education. For both parties involved, the transaction is a win-win—the *saṁgha* get sustained patronage for a relatively small percentage of the patrons' total value while the laity invests directly into their own spiritual and financial well-being.

Spending hard-earned wealth on the *saṁgha* has long been characterized as one of the primary ways laypersons are able to accumulate merit, thus entangling good works, karma, and money in a cosmic economy.[698] The donors may believe that they are earning

[697] AN II 53.

[698] The well-known concept of merit transfer has been previously studied by Gombrich, Rotman, Schopen, and others. For reference, we may cite Richard Gombrich. "Balancing of Karma." *South Asian Studies* 8 (1992): 133–34; Richard Gombrich. "'Merit Transference' in Sinhalese Buddhism." *History of Religions* 11

favorable rebirths or improving their moral standing while monastics are able to professionally pursue their practice (or devotion) freely with limited worries about food, shelter, or family. Beyond the transference of merit, wealth also provides stability in that it supports moral and spiritual development. Without wealth, householders may succumb to the pressures of survival and resort to evil behavior (like war or stealing).[699] According to Sizemore and Swearer, once a layperson is in a stable situation where wealth is ample, life becomes about something beyond money: "it is not the amount so much as the way the wealth is possessed and used that is subject to moral scrutiny."[700]

But what happens when the bank account of the *saṁgha* becomes greater than the laity which supports it? At least in modern examples of wealthy monasteries and temples immense wealth in the *saṁgha* in some Theravāda countries has been viewed with some scrutiny, even though the the *saṁgha* may have legally (according to the Vinaya as well as modern laws) been transferred that money.[701] The Dhammakāya Temple in modern Thailand exemplifies the problem of too much wealth which was not apparent in the Pāli Canon.[702] For some outspoken monks and laypersons there is a very old resentment over wealth that brings out debates not only relating to whether monks should have money (or just how much money they should have) but whether monastic education standards are too low since they now ordain the greedy. Wealth, for better or worse, makes for a very

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(1971): 203–19; Andy Rotman. *Thus Have I Seen*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 11; Schopen, "What's in a Name? The Religious Function of the Early Donative Inscriptions."

[699] See the position proposed by Peter Harvey. *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 195-197.

[700] R F Sizemore, and Donald K Swearer. *Ethics, Wealth and Salvation*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1990, p. 17.

[701] For a summary of modern issues like these, see Rachelle M Scott. *Nirvana for Sale?*, Albany: SUNY Press, 2009.

powerful lens in which one may view Buddhist institutions in the contemporary or ancient world.[703]

The perspectives towards wealth present in the above *sutta*-s is largely positive. However, just as wealth can often bring out serious political scrutiny in the modern world, so too did it in the ancient world—we just are unable to access detailed accounts of these tensions because of the nature of the normative texts. If there is one sentiment to take away from my examination it is that wealth itself should not be viewed as 'good' or 'bad'[704] but rather as an instrument by which lay and monastic individuals were able to operate in the ancient subcontinent that saw innumerable cultural advances happening daily, like the increasing usage of coins, widespread taxation, and land-ownership disputes.

My overarching argument as it relates to wealth and the laity is that the *saṁgha* presents a promise of value to the laity. In exchange for donations, the laity receives a promise from the *saṁgha* that their charity is a worthy spiritual cause. Theoretically, the Buddha cannot afford to prescribe strict rules towards wealth for the laity since their generosity is vital for the *saṁgha*. Moreover, the strict rules set forth in the *Pāṭimokkha* set an example as to how the monastics are different from the laity. The difference serves to separate the ordained religious professionals from the unordained utilizing the materiality of the world itself—meaning wealth, which is a necessary resource for survival and an important barometer for success. A clear disjunction between the two was

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[702] Scott, *Nirvana for Sale?*, p. 184-186.
[703] This is one of the main sentiments expressed in *Nirvana for Sale?,* p. 186-187.
[704] A similar conclusion was argued by Scott in *Nirvana for Sale?,* p. 32.

necessary for shaping a restrictive, exclusive organization that could be viewed as holier than those outside of the group because of their deliberate renunciation. In a way, the *saṁgha* ensured its own wealth by positioning itself to despise wealth.

5.4 AN INTERNAL MYTH OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION

Well-known since the beginning of Buddhist studies, the Vinaya's *Cūḷavagga* section on dwellings, the Senāsanakkhandhaka,[705] functions as a kind of fixed origin story for the *saṁgha* as a religious institution. The whole story reveals a gradual progression of not only the allowances for dwellings and things inside the dwellings but for the progression of the entire *saṁgha* from a unorganized band living in temporary shelters to a well-organized, well-housed institution with nuanced rules for nearly everything. As we will see, the allowances eventually become so nuanced within the story that the Buddha begins having to rule on etiquette—which is a far cry from allowing his monks to simply live in a shelter that was not at the foot of a tree, as was originally prescribed in the four *nissaya*-s. Given that this chapter is about perspectives towards wealth, one cannot understate the fact that such complexity, ranging from material concerns to rulings on social etiquette, would be impossible without an initial influx of money into the *saṁgha*. It would not have been possible for permanent shelters to have been built without generous contributions from the laity, who were, as aforementioned throughout this chapter, actively encouraged to donate to the *saṁgha* in exchange for tangible and intangible rewards.[706]

[705] Vin II 146.

[706] To review, the tangible rewards were promises that donation to the Buddhist *saṁgha* would lead to greater business prosperity. Meanwhile, intangible rewards were things like merit and favorable rebirth.

The story of the founding of the *saṁgha* as an institution begins with the Buddha staying in Rājagaha. There, at that time, lodgings had not been permitted to the monks. The monks were living at the feet of trees, on hillsides, in caves, in cemeteries, in the open air, in the forest, and on heaps of straw. One day, a merchant came during the morning to find throngs of monks gathering up coming from everywhere in the open landscape. The perplexed merchant, probably feeling guilty about living in a lavish home for himself, asked these monks if they would live in a permanent shelter if he built it for them. They responded no since the Buddha had not permitted them.

The monks went to the Buddha with this question. Without putting up any fight at all, the Buddha quickly permitted the usage of five kinds of dwellings: 1.) a *vihāra* ('monastery'); 2.) an *aḍḍhayogaṁ* ('curved house'); 3.) *pāsādaṁ* ('mansion'); 4.) *hammiyaṁ* ('long house'); 5.) and a *guhaṁ* ('cave'). Having been permitted the usage of these five dwellings, the monks went back to the merchant and told him the news. The merchant then built the *saṁgha* sixty dwelling-places. After those sixty dwellings were constructed, the merchant went to the Buddha himself and arranged to have a meal with the him. Over the course of the meal, the Buddha consented to the merchant that the dwellings would be in exchange for merit. Later, as a result of this new ruling, different people had dwellings built for the *saṁgha*.

After many buildings had been constructed,[707] to the dismay of everyone, the buildings did not have doors which allowed snakes, scorpions, centipedes, and other pests

[707] Elsewhere, at Sāvatthī, having heard about the new permissions for the *saṁgha*, Anāthapiṇḍika came across a particularly beautiful and fitting location to build a dwelling for the Buddha, since it was not too far from the village and not too near, suitable for coming and going, and accessible with little sound. Having found a piece of land belonging to Prince Jeta, Anāthapiṇḍika attempted to purchase it with many

to get inside. The Buddha then allowed for doors. Having made the door latches with vines, rats eventually ate through the vines and the doors fell down. Telling the Buddha about this problem, the Buddha permitted the usage of doorposts, lintels, mortar, holes for pulling the cords through, and a post for a bolt to shut the door. Next, the Buddha allowed for keys of various sizes, then roofs made of grasses, windows of various types, drapery and shutters to keep out squirrels and bats, benches for sitting, couches made of bamboo, and chairs made of wood.

However, soon thereafter these rules had been established, six monks laid down to sleep on the high couches, just as householders who enjoyed sense-pleasures did. Quickly after hearing about this the Buddha ruled that monks were not allowed to sleep on the high couches and that they were committing an offense.

Still yet later a group of six naughty monks, taking advantage of yet another permitted rule that they could create designs upon the dwellings, began to make designs with figures of women and men. However, householders who saw these designs were appalled and thus the Buddha then made a ruling about limiting such kinds of bold designs. And so forth the story goes with the Buddha allowing different material *things* for the *saṁgha*. On various occasions, though, when necessary, he also created rules forbidding specific behaviors, like sleeping on high couches.

Other episodes described rulings upon monastic etiquette which were a direct result of the increased materiality experienced by the *saṁgha* at that time. For instance, in

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thousands of coins that he laid out upon the landscape. However, Prince Jeta refused the offer and decided to donate the grove to the *saṁgha* for free. This episode displays the kind of prestige gifting to the *saṁgha* brought to an individual.

time, the monks began to squabble over who would get to sit in the best seat, use the best waters for washing, or receive the best alms. Not knowing any better, the monks began to make up their own rules with their own justifications, such as he who comes from the best *brāhmaṇa* family should receive the best alms, or he who knows the *suttanta*-s should receive the best of something else, and so forth they went making rules for themselves. However, the Buddha, having heard about the squabbles, made a simple rule that monastic rank was based on monastic seniority. The rule was extrapolated to apply to a variety of episodes where the naughty group of six caused trouble.

Still yet later the lodgings became disorganized and uncomfortable. The Buddha then allowed for an Assigner of Lodgings to become an official monastic office to ensure that monks did not fight over rooms. Other similar official positions were eventually allowed by the Buddha to end various disagreements.

In the end, the allowance for and subsequent construction of lodgings brought about much trouble for the nascent institution which was not previously equipped to deal with the new problems that arose. Luckily, the Buddha possessed the wisdom to create rules for these problems, many of which actually required further sub-rulings in order to be legal.

This internal myth of the *saṁgha*'s institutionalization from a group *without* permanent things to a group *with* lodgings, objects, and a large bevy of rules and etiquette to accompany them brings to light the fact that the *saṁgha* itself *required a way to explain* how it came to be like it was. I would contend that such a self-reflective state of

mind is a signal that the *saṁgha* viewed itself as ready for an origin story in the first place.

Complexity

Looking back at the material covered in this chapter we may begin to see a narrative from the Pāli sources with three separate facets. First, the burgeoning *saṁgha* existed with a finite number of rules because it had only a finite number of concerns, most of which dealt with what a monk could and could not do. By and large, at the beginning of the religious tradition, as shown in the *Pāṭimokkha* rules I cited, the monks were not permitted to do many things at all. Next, the *saṁgha* gradually received better and better patronage from a laity that was excited for the new teachings of the Buddha. The *saṁgha* must have been acutely aware of the potential between a mutual business partnership between the monks and their lay supporters. Together, as demonstrated in the *sutta* passages from the *Dīgha*, *Saṁyutta*, and *Aṅguttara Nikāya*-s, they were able to grow in material wealth but also in spiritual wealth given the lenient perspectives towards wealth that the Buddha enunciated. Lastly, the self-aware monastic institution required a forming myth to describe how it came to be.

As we have seen, the Pāli Buddhist canonical literature, very likely part of the earliest or one of the earliest strata of Indian Buddhist literature, contained an identifiable thread for which we can trace the ongoing complexity of attitudes towards wealth, money, and economics. The earliest material, that which was attributed to the Buddha himself in the *Pātimokkha*, contains very few rules pertaining to the handling of money by monastics (all of which are nearly completely restrictive) and contains no explanations

as to how the *saṁgha* should govern its internal finances. In fact, the Buddha does not even provide a technical term to the layperson a monastic should rely upon to receive donated funds, such as those allotted for robes. Instead, a "steward" (*veyyāvaccakara*) is given this duty.

The development of the concept, from monastic attendant to a full-fledged attendant of a monk who appropriates (or legitimizes) things is a reflection of internal development within the *saṁgha* that highlights the need for sub-categories of attendants. Even more, it is well known that *vinaya*-s compiled later, such as the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* are extremely rich if not even dense in monastic rules and the stories used to relay those rules using compounded technical terminologies also reflect historical institutional development. Monastic administrators were aware of a need to explain how and why they came to have such administrative offices so they composed a genesis of the *saṁgha* in the *Senāsanakkhandhaka*[708] that suited the monastic reality of the time. There, in the new story the *saṁgha* is gradually allowed more and more amenities to supplement the original necessities required in daily life, which in itself came with a bevy of rules and sub-rules. One inadvertent fruit of such institutional complexity was sedentary monasticism. Like people during the Neolithic period who came to live closer and closer together, it was only a matter of time before the monks' group grew to the size where they had to stabilize in a central structure or set of structures, like monasteries.

As I mentioned in Chapter 1, Section 2, the evidence for *vihāra*-s during the post-Mauryan period before the turn into the Common Era is limited, if not altogether absent,

[708] Vin II 146.

aside from cave temples and small sleeping areas at cave sites on the Western Deccan. More or less, free standing *vihāra*-s made of permanent materials were not a common feature until the Common Era. If we consider the fact that the Pāli canon discussed a point in early Buddhist history where monks were to rely upon the four basic *nissaya*-s, such as *piṇḍiyālopabhojana*, 'meal scraps,' *paṁsukūlacīvara*, 'robes of rags,' *rukkhamūlasenāsana*, 'lodging at the foot of a tree,' and *pūtimuttabhesajja*, 'medicine of foul-smelling cattle urine,' then many monks and nuns could have sought shelter in lodgings made of impermanent materials like wood or in caves that were naturally cool and provided some semblance of protection. Alternatively, monks during our period may have lived in regular dwellings side by side with non-monastics. Schopen has speculated that since in the post-Aśokan period there are no inscriptions which use the word *vihāra*, monks and nuns must reside "exactly like lay donors…[in] their natal or residential villages."[709] To strengthen his point, he cites a passage from the Suttanipāta, which he believed to be one of the earliest parts of the Pāli canon. There the passage reads *...yatacāri gāme*, which Norman had translated as "… living in a restrained way in a village."[710] Unfortunately, Schopen did not provide the context for the passage, which has the Buddha only describing how one should act after receiving alms. Therefore, even if Schopen is right with his idea that monastics did live "exactly like lay donors" in villages, he has done little in the way to support the assertion with textual evidence. Either way, whether Schopen is right or if monastics during this period were still wandering or living

[709] Schopen, "Doing Business for the Lord," p. 550.
[710] K R. Norman. *The Rhinoceros Horn and Other Early Buddhist Poems*, London and Boston: Pali Text Society, 1985, p. 157.

in temporary dwellings, my main point stands: full-fledged sedentary monasticism, of which we only begin to see trace amounts of material evidence for during the earliest period at Sanchi, seems to historically correlate rather well with the accumulated epigraphic evidence for patronage. Institutional complexity brought on by a charismatic leader, an increase in circulated wealth brought on by flexible attitudes towards economic prosperity, and increasingly efficient trade routes allowed for the *saṁgha* to settle down during an era ripe with resources.

I locate social complexity in the *saṁgha*'s multivalent perspective towards wealth. Unlike writing (Chapter 3) and charismatic entrepreneurs (Chapter 4), social complexity in the form of wealth is an excellent measuring stick for assessing legitimacy and power. In the case of early Indian Buddhism, legitimacy and power were largely predicated on the idea of societal withdrawal, which meant the public denial of wealth for the monastics. Carefully, the very same system that denied wealth crafted a method to encourage wealth since it meant symbiosis and survival.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

> "Money is the purest form of the tool… it is an institution through which the individual concentrates his activity and possessions in order to attain goals that he could not attain directly… The nature and effectiveness of money is not to be found simply in the coin that I hold in my hand; its qualities are invested in the social organizations and the supra-subjective norms that make this coin a tool of endlessly diverse and extensive uses despite its material limitations, its insignificance and rigidity…"
>
> - Georg Simmel, 1907[711]

6.1 SUMMARY OF CONTENT

I began my journey in modern day Bodh Gaya where I witnessed trans-national pilgrimage as a vehicle for the redistribution of wealth to and from the Buddhist *saṁgha*. The inclusivity of money in the everyday lives of renunciants spurred questions of historical provenance since Theravāda monastics traditionally took vows restricting their interaction with money and bartering. I asked myself, was this a continuation of tradition or a necessary innovation of contemporary society? Further, was there evidence in the historical record to show a similar phenomenon? If so, where? I concluded that there was an excellent cache of extant information to parse at a place called Sanchi in modern Madhya Pradesh, India. There I found evidence of an enormous institution involved in the construction of some of the largest religious monuments known from ancient India and not a group of disparate, homeless monastics. The institution was a manifestation of a kind of religious high culture, defined by archaeologists as "the production and

[711] Georg Simmel. *The Philosophy of Money*. Edited by David Frisby, Translated by Tom Bottomore and David Frisby, London and New York: Routledge, 1990, p. 210.

consumption of aesthetic items under the control, and for the benefit of the inner elite."[712] At Sanchi, such high cultural commodities took the form of beautiful artwork, relics meant for worship, and, perhaps, water tanks, dams, and reservoirs. How did the *saṁgha* participate in the development, maintainence, and control (however limited) of such commodities? The answer was found in hundreds of short donative inscriptions found throughout the site indicating that financial prosperity was one cultivated trait of an elaborate network of patrons who supported the Sanchi *saṁgha* from cities, villages, and towns near and far.

After examining this patronage network, my primary argument is that the *saṁgha* at Sanchi found institutional success in an inclusive attitude towards wealth and opted to engage directly with money matters rather than shy away. Sanchi was a product of Early Historic Period urbanization. During the era, the religious landscape was changing just as the geographic landscape was becoming built up. At Sanchi, we see the blending of śramaṇic, renunciant religion with monumentality through the epigraphic corpus (Chapter 2). I organized 629 donative records into two distinct donor generations separated by a relative chronology (Chapter 3). The first generation, called SG1 (='Sanchi Generation 1') and dating to the mid-1st century BCE, contained 257 donative inscriptions from *stūpa* 2 and *stūpa* 1's berm *vedikā*. Meanwhile, the second generation, SG2 and dating to the late 1st century BCE, contained 372 donations all from the ground *vedikā* of *stūpa* 1. The inscriptions portray the story of not only individual donors but also the story of how the names of monks, nuns, merchants, and everyday laypersons came to be carved in

[712] John Baines, and Norman Yoffee. "Order, Legitimacy and Wealth in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia."

permanent stone next to one another in front of a massive reliquary meant for veneration. The donative records functioned as a kind of visual archive of these donors' generosity. I hypothesized that many if not most early Buddhist donative inscriptions at Sanchi and other *stūpa* sites like it operated as records for posterity rather than simply as markers of merit transfer. The inscriptions, then, were meant to carry meaning for both the donors, the *saṁgha*, and future pilgrims who come to Sanchi to worship the *stūpa*-s and bear witness to the *saṁgha*'s remarkable effort to mobilize patronage from hundreds of local and non-local patrons living in dozens of nodes. I measured donation rates over time to test the network for efficiency. The data implied that the Sanchi patronage network quickly became stronger and healthier with new financial nodes to tap between SG1 and SG2. One possible reason for or consequence of such a growth in patronage network efficiency was increased materiality, meaning new monuments, new adornments, and expansions of old features. The advent of writing during the time of Aśoka in the 3rd century BCE granted the Buddhists of the 2nd and 1st centuries BCE a tool to record and administrate, display, and proudly promote its own financial success.

To give a face to the force at least partially responsible for Sanchi's rise to prominence I filtered the inscriptional corpus and singled out one family of elite donors (Chapter 4). Identified by the inscriptional use of their metronymic, the Gotiputa family were elite, *brāhmaṇa*-s of society with members belonging to the ruling classes, the mercantile classes, and, at Sanchi, the elite monastic Buddhist class. Enshrined in *stūpa* 2 was at least one member of the family who became regionally famous for being a

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In *Archaic States*, edited by Gary M Feinman and Joyce Marcus, 199–260, Santa Fe, 1998, p. 235.

renowned teacher with a multiplicity of monastic pupils, who coincidentally also seemed to have become famous. This Gotiputa may have been part of a lineage dating back to the Third Council in the 3rd century BCE where a number of monks went on a mission to the Himalayas. From inscriptions found on his reliquaries, the enshrined Gotiputa is called a spiritual heir to this lineage and his relics were possibly enshrined alongside a number of famous teachers. Sanchi was not the only place to enshrine the famous Gotiputa—at least two other nearby sites also setup *stūpa*-s with his relics. Several other Gotiputa family members became revered monastic teachers and patrons to the Sanchi *saṁgha*. I presented some evidence to suggest that the Gotiputas were an elite family, inside and outside the *saṁgha*, that understood the power embedded within an economic impulse. I characterized the Gotiputas as charismatic entrepreneurs who inherited the charisma of previous monastic teachers and eventually routinized that charisma into the *saṁgha* since after the 1st century CE the Gotiputas no longer appeared in the extant material record.

Looking to the Pāli Canon, I catalogued some attitudes towards wealth that could have conceivably been responsible for the growth and increased efficiency of a monastic patronage network like the one found at Sanchi (Chapter 5). Although the Buddha in the Vinaya disallowed monastics direct interaction with money, it outlined several potential avenues whereby the *saṁgha* could accept or engage with money indirectly, such as through the use of a *veyyāvaccakara* (‘lay steward’), or through *anāpatti*-s (‘exceptions’). Further, the Buddha described many perspectives in the Nikāya *sutta* literature encouraging the accumulation and preservation of wealth for the laity. In this context, three themes emerged: 1.) wealth is a useful tool for the laity because it generates

happiness (and allows a path to support the *saṁgha*); 2.) wealth guards against calamities and lethargy; and 3.) wealth acts as a barometer to gauge society's health and morality, since an impoverished society is likely to engage in crime and people are more likely to become immoral. Generally, for the laity, wealth was interpreted as a boon. I viewed the range of perspectives on wealth and its utility as representative of the *saṁgha*'s developing complexity which stemmed from the growth of the *saṁgha* in terms of number of members, number of patrons, number of monuments, and number of sites. One reflection of the *saṁgha*'s own internal recognized need to accommodate increased institutional complexity was to formulate an internal myth of institutionalization, as found in the Vinaya's *Senāsanakkhandhaka* which described a story in which the Buddha allowed the monks more and more things, such as doors and handles, along with etiquette to deal with the new allowances.

6.2 A PROPOSED HISTORICAL TIMELINE

At its core, this dissertation broadly investigated three centuries of patronage while focusing on two generations of donors in the 1st century BCE. A major argument made throughout separated early Indian Buddhist donative epigraphy into two categories: those utilizing the short-form formula and those utilizing a long-form formula. Table 6.1 below summarizes the two formulae.

	Short-Form Donative Formula	Long-Form Donative Formula
Purpose:	To portray pithy records for posterity, possibly for administrative or record-keeping reasons	To portray especially large contributions or long-term endowments to the *saṁgha* by elites for the sake of acquiring merit and social capital
Findspots:	Primarily large *stūpa* complexes on hilltops	Anywhere, but especially cave monasteries
Patrons:	Anyone	Mostly elites, like royals or wealthy merchants
Numbers:	Dozens per site, up to hundreds per site (Sanchi)	Few per site
Earliest Records:	Late 2nd century BCE	Rarely: 3rd/2nd century BCE ; Commonly: 1st century BCE
Latest Records:	2nd century CE	10th or 11th century CE
Primary Marker:	*dānaṁ* at the end	*deyadhamaṁ* at the end[713]

Table 6.1: Description of Two Donative Formulas

Besides the features listed in Table 6.1, the two formulae may be distinguished based on their self-identified intention to transfer merit. In Chapter 3 Section 4, I analyzed several exceptions to the short-formula that did, in fact, describe early attempts at stating intentionality. Several donors from Bharhut, Pauni, and Sri Lanka intended the merit from their gift to be transferred to relatives or for the welfare of all beings, which is a major characteristic of long-form donative inscriptions commonly found after the 1st century CE. I speculate that these several deviant inscriptions may have been precursors to the long-form donative inscriptions. At first, neither the donors nor the administrators in charge of inscribing the inscriptions realized the full potential of the written form. Writing was mostly for practical purposes, like for creating mercantile seals to stamp goods to check transactions amongst merchants. However, at some point during the early 1st century BCE, some Buddhists began to realize the hidden potential latent in the written form and attempted to express something that went beyond the pragmatic. Eventually, the

short-form inscriptional formula was abandoned altogether because it could no longer properly serve the needs of the community, which wanted to express the transfer of merit in exchange for a donation. According to the evidence I have found and presented in this dissertation, there is a clear timeline that can be used to trace this event from inception to widespread usage.

It is also possible to use the same timeline to trace significant events within the Sanchi *saṁgha*'s lifespan. In Chapter 4 Section 6 I summarized the Gotiputas impact on the Sanchi *saṁgha* with a timeline. Table 6.2 outlines major events at Sanchi, in South Asia, and for the Gotiputa family. For comparison, I included a column describing the donative formula's change.

	South Asian Buddhism	**Sanchi**	**Gotiputas**	**Donations**
3rd c. BCE	- Aśoka's patronage - Advent of writing - Urbanization	- *Stūpa* 1	- Gotiputas were part of the elite class throughout South Asia	- None / only Aśoka
2nd c. BCE	- Enlargement of trade routes	- Some new monuments (*stūpa* 2)	- One Gotiputa becomes a famous monastic teacher in and around Sanchi; becomes enshrined	- Short-form formula develops - Some long-form take shape
1st c. BCE	- Early manuscripts	- SG1 - Site expansion - *Stūpa* enlargements - Many new monuments at Sanchi and at Andher, Sonari, Satdhara, Morel Khurd - Few platformed monasteries	- New generation of Gotiputas occupying Sanchi	- Short-form formula zenith - Very few long-form inscriptions
1st c. BCE, late	- Pāli canon written down (Sri Lanka)	- SG2 - Expansion of patronage network - New nodes	- Multiple Gotiputas assume local positions of power - Continuation of teaching lineage	- Short-form formula zenith - Very few long-form inscriptions
1st c. CE	- First Buddha images - Buddhism expands to China	- *Toraṇa*-s constructed - Traditional monasteries built on site	n/a	- Few short-form inscriptions - More long-form inscriptions

Table 6.2: Timeline of Events at Sanchi

[713] A similar distinction was made in Gauriswar Bhattacharya. "Dāna-Deyadharma: Donation in Early Buddhist Records (in Brāhmī)." In *Investigating Indian Art*, edited by M Yaldiz and W Lobo, 39–60, Berlin, n.d.

Table 6.2 attempts to synthesize major events with some events outlined in this dissertation.[714] Some members of the Gotiputa group utilized and promoted the Buddhist *saṁgha* to acquire personal *and* institutional success. In doing so, they assisted Buddhism in central India in cultivating three practices extremely well: 1.) The process of making religion a family business using scions; 2.) The accumulation of symbolic and economic capital; and 3.) the creation of an elastic patronage network for sustainability. These three innovative factors set Buddhism up as a major player—and often winner—in the competitive religious marketplace of ancient India.

Towards the end of the 2nd century BCE, something unique to the early history of Indian religion happened: donative records became a common phenomenon. Although some pithy donative records existed before SG1, I hypothesize that the formula was nearly codified during SG1 indicating that there was conscious effort made by some monastic overseer at the top of the *saṁgha*'s hierarchy. More importantly, though, at least at Sanchi, and probably elsewhere, especially in the immediate vicinity, the first actions of the newly institutional system of solicitation was to enshrine important members of their own order, once again signaling the importance of the famous Gotiputa in and

[714] The most obvious question one might have of the timeline in Table 6.2 comes during the 1st c. CE when the Gotiputas disappear altogether from the inscriptional record at Sanchi. Presently, I have no explanation for this, although it seems likely that the group would have moved away from the vicinity or that they simply lacked representation in the extant record since it is unlikely that they died out. Like most historical actors, the available evidence no longer is able to tell their story. One might have hypothesized that the Gotiputas might have became even more visible with the rise of the long-form donative inscription formula, but that is not the case at Sanchi. Nevertheless, there is a strong correlation between the transformation of the Sanchi hilltop, its patronage network, and the involvement of elites like the Gotiputas. While it is unclear just how involved they were in the administration of the Sanchi *saṁgha*, they are, for intentions of this dissertation, a representative group that may have left us a clue as to what other monastic elites were doing during the same era.

around Sanchi. However, the actual financial support for such enshrinement primarily came from members of the monastic order and from local patrons.

SG2 made alterations to the system and maximized its potential. We can see this change in the network itself. The number of locals contributing to the construction projects lessened while the number of foreigners increased dramatically. Moreover, there was a drastic decrease of monastics contributing financially to the projects while there was a very noticeable increase in the number of relatives, wealthy elites, and group donors. Given that the sheer number of villages and cities acknowledged in the donor records increases by roughly 50%, it is very apparent that the concerted efforts in Generation 2 were successful in expanding the "business" of Buddhism. Somewhere near the top of the monastic hierarchy was once again a Gotiputa and his disciples. Unfortunately, this style of patronage did not last as in the very next century the style of donation changes nearly completely, coming to favor entirely different formulae altogether to accommodate very large donations of entire structures.

The Gotiputas internally possessed, together as a prominent family, all the tools necessary to create, lead, implement, and carry out the necessary tasks required to expand the business of Buddhism 'beyond the monastery walls'.[715] From several generations of experience working inside and outside the confines of both the monastery, the mercantile system, and the political system, it is possible that the Gotiputas themselves, along with perhaps others like them, were the ones who transformed Buddhist patronage from an

[715] I deliberately employ this phrase to harken back to what my former teacher Lars Fogelin once implied. See Lars Fogelin. "Beyond the Monastery Walls." PhD Dissertation, supervised by Carla Sinopoli, University of Michigan, 2003.

internal preoccupation with familiar faces to an internal/external occupation whereby new nodes were tapped to create the economic capital required to construct new monuments. This could only have been done if the men responsible had accrued enough capital of their own to convince the monastic order to go along with their plan.

Finally, my last premise concerning the Gotiputas and the routinization of charisma is that macro-institutional change may be seen reflected in micro-transactions. As such, each time charisma became routinized, new forms of patronage became paramount, probably reflecting the new leaders' vision of a sustained religious institution. In short, studying Generations 1 and 2 revealed a semi-collective style of patronage that did not last into the Common Era. It is tempting to view institutional change of this size as a result of schism, which is easily a byproduct of most successful monetary campaigns. On the other hand, while schism did indeed loom on the horizon for Indian Buddhism, the change of patronage styles throughout the centuries considered *here* echo the exact opposite. Instead of schism, the now-fully charged Buddhist institution in central India grew strong and continued to innovate and evolve to match the ever-changing society around it. The result was a sustained dominance of the religious marketplace and the expansion beyond South Asia entirely.

6.3 THEORETICAL MODELS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Throughout this dissertation I have used the burgeoning Buddhist *saṁgha* in and around Sanchi in Early Historic Period central India as a case study to explore the effects of an inclusive approach towards wealth on a monastic institution. In the above section, I proposed and outlined a historical model of major themes. However, in this section I

would like to briefly consider some theoretical ideas to further illuminate the Sanchi case study. I hope that these theoretical concepts may assist in generating future comparisons between the Sanchi patronage network model and others.

To me, the development of the Sanchi *saṁgha* as an institution parallels the development of states[716] in the ancient world. Although the analogy has its limitations,[717] there are several reasons to draw a comparison. Like a state, the Sanchi *saṁgha* is a complex society, albeit a small one.[718] It maintained a core (the Sanchi hilltop and its *stūpa*-s) and a periphery (the surrounding *stūpa* hilltops along with the local monastic orders in towns, villages, and cities). It accumulated wealth to sustain its existence and provide the elites with access to special goods (meaning, for the monastic elites, direct access to the relics buried within a *stūpa*, and for the non-monastic elites, access to the most renowned teachers as well as the relics). It also participated in long-distance communications (and probably exchange goods and ideas) with other *saṁgha*'s and far away cities (possibly as far away as a city like Varanasi which housed Sarnath and its

[716] I follow Yoffee in that there is no set definition of a state and that so-called "archaic states" are often subjected to mythological traits that may or may not be true. This is one of the main themes found in the excellent *Myths of the Archaic State*, written by Norman Yoffee.

[717] I am, of course, not calling the Sanchi *saṁgha* a state but rather am theoretically applying some qualities of ancient states to the *saṁgha* in order to gain access to a lens that, I believe, sheds light on how the *saṁgha* at Sanchi developed over time.

[718] Some research on hunter-gatherer societies in North America has shown that small-scale societies, too, can exhibit "complexity" akin to polities. See, for example, Kenneth E Sassaman. "Complex Hunter-Gatherers in Evolution and History." *Journal of Archaeological Research* 12, no. 3 (2004): 227–80. Sassaman also discussed the problem with the phrase "societal complexity," especially with regard to these kinds of small-scale hunter-gatherer units. Some kind of discussion here may be informative in the analogy that the Sanchi *saṁgha* existed as a kind of very small state.

saṁgha). Moreover, although it is speculation only, the Sanchi *saṁgha* very likely adhered to an orally composed code of law potentially similar to the Pāli Vinaya.[719]

Another way that the Sanchi *saṁgha* paralleled the development of a small, ancient polity is in the way the *saṁgha* manifested order, legitimacy, and wealth, three analytical concepts that explain how "high culture"[720] was manufactured and sustained.[721] The high cultural commodities at Sanchi as I see them were beautiful artwork and architecture, relics, and possibly even water control (namely dams and reservoirs). Originally built as a platform for comparative methodology, order, legitimacy and wealth (OLW) measure and, to some degree, explain the impact of wealth and high culture on the development of states. Baines and Yoffee,[722] the two main proponents of a OLW model for ancient states, argue that OLW provide politico-economic stability for the elites who are the primary beneficiaries of the high cultural products, even though the manifestations of OLW vary from society to society. Originally, Baines and Yoffee compared and contrasted ancient Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt and analyzed how the elites used OLW to their own advantage.

[719] Many of these same features were present in the earliest, small states found in Mesopotamia. For example, for a discussion on a written code of law, see Yoffee, *Myths of the Archaic State*, pp. 100-109.
[720] For the sake of ease, Baines and Yoffee define high culture as "the production and consumption of aesthetic items under the control, and for the benefit of the inner elite." John Baines, and Norman Yoffee. "Order, Legitimacy and Wealth in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia." In *Archaic States*, edited by Gary M Feinman and Joyce Marcus, 199–260, Santa Fe, 1998, p. 235.
[721] I am following the terms as they were defined in Mary Van Buren, and Janet Richards. "Ideology, Wealth, and the Comparative Study of 'Civilisations'" and Baines and Yoffee. "Order, Legitimacy, and Wealth: Setting the Terms."
[722] Baines and Yoffee, "Order, Legitimacy and Wealth in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia." and Baines and Yoffee, "Order, Legitimacy, and Wealth: Setting the Terms" pp. 13–17.

To briefly define the terms, order is a fragile ideology whereby society is essentially controlled (or coerced) through the generation of organizing principles.[723] Order may be threatened by competing orders or by economic collapse. For the Sanchi *saṁgha*, order is Buddhism, which, for the monastics, probably took some form of renunciation. For the laity, order might be the ability to obtain merit or a favorable rebirth. Order is manifested at Sanchi in the monumental architecture surrounding the institution,[724] such as the *stūpa*-s, temples, and, eventually, monasteries. Many of these monuments contain art, for example, that provides examples as to how to live, worship, and provide for the *saṁgha*.

Legitimacy is the acceptance of the elite's role maintaining and providing order.[725] Legitimacy may be obtained, by the elites, through the control and manipulation of "central cultural symbols" and exercising their duty as mediators for the high cultural goods. For example, at Sanchi, the very existence of *stūpa* 2, which housed the relics of monastic elites, including the famous Gotiputa, is the very embodiment of legitimacy since non-elites would have been made to recognize the authority of those enshrined elites by venerating them and contributing to the *stūpa*'s patronage.

Wealth sustains both order and legitimacy.[726] Without wealth, the monumental architecture at Sanchi would not exist and neither would the order and legitimacy of the institution. However, on the other hand, the display of wealth, through, for instance, elaborate adornments to *stūpa*-s or the writing of donor records on *vedikā*-s, separates elite cultural symbols and spaces from non-elite symbols and spaces. The cultivation of

[723] Van Buren and Richards, "Ideology, Wealth, and the Comparative Study of 'Civilisations'," p. 4.
[724] See DeMarrais and Castillo, "Ideology, Materialization, and Power Strategies."
[725] DeMarrais and Castillo, "Ideology, Wealth, and the Comparative Study of 'Civilisations'," p. 4.
[726] DeMarrais and Castillo, "Ideology, Wealth, and the Comparative Study of 'Civilisations'," p. 4.

wealth through, for instance, sympathetic economic attitudes, then, reinforces the *saṁgha*'s role in the community.

At its core, the OLW model is an archaeological take on power. Applying OLW to analysis of political economy is a particularly apt since it can easily describe the tensions between political leaders, competitors, and the struggle for control of resources. Applying OLW to the Sanchi *saṁgha*, however, is a new utilization of the concept since the Sanchi *saṁgha* was not a polity but rather an emergent (albeit complex) institution seeking to differentiate itself from other local religious institutions.[727]

OLW is just one lens we might use to view Sanchi's *saṁgha* and its elites, like the Gotiputas. It is a useful tool for the content analyzed in this dissertation because my primary source is donative epigraphy. Donative records, particularly the short-form ones appearing in the hundreds at Sanchi during SG1 and SG2, describe a micro-transaction from one party to another. We do not know exactly what was transferred, although it more often than not was probably money, food, medicine, or some other kind of material resource that the monastics could not purchase directly—but we know that a transaction, in fact, did take place. We also do not know if the micro-transaction was an exchange, meaning we cannot determine, generally, with the short-form inscriptions, that there was something received by the donor in exchange for their initial gift. However, the patronage

[727] We know that Buddhism during the Early Historic Period in and around Vidisha was competing with a Vāsudeva cult given the inscription found on the Heliodorus pillar just five miles from the Sanchi hilltop. Moreover, it would appear as if a local Nāga cult was somehow incorporated (or subsumed?) into the Buddhist Sanchi hilltop given the abundance of Nāga statues found on Sanchi hill and on the surrounding hills. Many were probably moved to rest within the boundaries of the Buddhist *saṁgha*'s area at Sanchi while others were consistently erected outside the boundaries, showing that there was likely some ongoing competition and/or tension between the Buddhists and the Nāga devotees.

network's increased qualities over time, namely its efficiency, its scope, and its strength, represent the strength of the order and legitimacy of the elites for the sake of wealth.

The Seeds of Institutionalized Religion

If the OLW model allows comparison to other cultural institutions, such as ancient polities, is there another model which may allow for comparison with other religious institutions more specifically? Although preliminary only, I hypothesize that there are certain features within a religious institution during its formative years which can be utilized as a simple heuristic. I call these the "seeds" of institutionalized religion since they were, at least according to my reading of early Indian Buddhism outside of Magadha for which we have a relatively large epigraphic dataset, impactful cultural factors catalyzing or perhaps amplifying the growth of the *saṁgha* at Sanchi.

The first seed is the advent of writing. The genesis of writing throughout the world has coincided with the rise of financial institutions and markets because one of the primary impetuses for marking things on materials is to keep track of commodities.[728] In my research, I have found that the Buddhists were the first or one of the first groups outside of government institutions in South Asia to take advantage of the newly minted idea of expressing words on permanent or semi-permanent materials. Writing, particularly inscribing, became not only an effective way to communicate ideas, as religious literature and other documents show, but also an efficient way to organize, record, and administrate institutions. The Buddhists were able to seize this technology and utilize it in new ways in the 3rd century BCE and again in the 1st century BCE when,

if we are to believe the normative monastic literatures themselves, the Pāli canon (and probably authoritative texts in other languages) were first written down.[729] Introduced by Aśoka in the 3rd century BCE, the *brāhmī* script became a major method by which the Buddhist institution could express itself and, eventually, its ideas in material form. Writing as it manifested as donative epigraphy on stone functioned as a tool of order and legitimacy (known from Baines and Yoffee's OLW model). The donative records were augments to the material cultural text; they were the colophon that allowed the *saṁgha* to leave an ongoing message of the power to extract patronage from the geographical region of its choosing. Eventually, this "seed" became, with the long-form donative formula, an even more powerful broadcaster of the *saṁgha*'s order and legitimacy by inculcating a religious ideal, namely merit transfer through permanent endowment. The advent of widespread epigraphic records all throughout the subcontinent, particularly at Buddhist localities, demonstrates the practicality for the emergent institution. My aforementioned argument that private donative epigraphs also function as records for posterity shows just one way writing/inscribing may be useful within the *saṁgha*'s socio-political milieu.

The second seed is one or many charismatic visionaries to lead and inspire generations. Here I deployed Nancy Stalker's term "charismatic entrepreneur" to describe the powerful luminaries who were at the forefront of the burgeoning religious institution in the wake of the founder's death.[730] I study these charismatic entrepreneurs as different

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[728] For more references and brief discussion, see Norman Yoffee. *Myths of the Archaic State*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 94.
[729] Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, p. 642.
[730] The term is directly borrowed from Stalker, *Prophet Motive*. Stalker proposed the term to describe the process by which New Religions gain supporters through centralized, powerful, dynamic, and, most importantly, charismatic leadership. Although she uses the term to describe a new religious group in Japan

than the other leaders of the religious institution who either inherited their position or were elected into it based on their achievements. Charismatic entrepreneurs were the jokers in the deck. As wildcards, they likely were divisive but ultimately without their vision for how to take advantage of an increasingly complex society and its technologies, such as financial investment and writing, the institution would have been slower to materialize as a fully institutionalized, sustained group who all believed in the same or similar core tenants as orated by the Buddha. At least one influential charismatic entrepreneur may have been the enshrined Gotiputa in Sanchi *stūpa* 2. We also know that a tradition of influential teachers that also called themselves Gotiputa persisted for at least the next generation which saw an even greater expansion of the site and its patronage. Charismatic entrepreneurs, like the Gotiputas, embodied an economic impulse to succeed. The charismatic entrepreneurs were the new elites of the *saṁgha* who oversaw its transformation into a powerful entity harnessing the patronage from an efficient network of nodes. These leaders transformed intangible power into tangible manifestations of order and legitimacy. Basically, as it relates to Baines and Yoffee's OLW model, the charismatic entrepreneurs were the elites in charge of creating, manipulating, and sustaining high culture.

The last seed of institutionalized religion is societal complexity[731], including intricate attitudes towards wealth. Society at the time of the Buddha was undergoing

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during the early 20th century, I believe the exact same sentiments are likely to be in play during the rise of Buddhist institutionalization as presented in this dissertation. Innovative ideas and their successful deployment lay at the heart of a New Religion's development and ultimate lasting endurance.

[731] Pertaining to the definition of societal complexity, I more or less follow the work of Norman Yoffee, *Myths of the Archaic State*. Here and throughout his corpus of work on the development of society he argues against a neo-evolutionary theory of state development. Instead, he proposes societal diversity and

major changes as urbanization, agriculture, and organized governments began to appear in ancient India for probably the first time since the disappearance of what we call the Indus Valley civilization. I do not support the concept that the timeline ranging from the Indus Valley civilization to the time of the Mauryans was broken or experienced a so-called "dark age."[732] Nevertheless, there is a distinct gap in understanding this period from roughly the 18th century BCE to the 4th century BCE. Part of that misunderstanding is that there were vacuums of power that led to a decrease in societal efficiency. In other words, Indian society—or, more probably, societies—in the north were not organized into advanced cities with any centralized power. Around the time of the Buddha and thereafter a series of powerful kings in the region of Magadha that pressed forward the idea of social cohesion and technological advancement, notably with Aśoka and his fundamental vision for his empire. I argue that any established religious institution would be hard-pressed to exist without such societal complexity let alone sophisticated attitudes towards wealth and how to obtain it. Societal complexity may be represented by diversification of modes of production, inequality between classes, and/or the construction of monuments to establish ideology (and also more efficient

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that there was no truly archaic singular state. Even when looking at the Indus Valley civilization we do not see an archaic state but rather one with competing elites within an advanced city-state. See Jonathan Mark Kenoyer. "Early City-States in South Asia." In *The Archaeology of City States*, edited by Deborah L Nichols and T H Charlton, 51–70, Washington, DC, 1997. For me, within the context of Early Historic Period urbanization and the rise of Buddhism's institution(s), societal complexity means a gradual increase of uniformity across culture, such as language, technology, material culture, use of money, and governance. Societal complexity is not a linear progression but rather a slow maneuvering towards standardization to accommodate new ideas, tools, skills, and motivations. It is often theorized that such standardization comes from authoritarian regimes forcing a move towards certain customs. However, as Yoffee and others have repeatedly now shown sheer market competition can drive societal complexity and fashion new standards based on the populace's own will. Societal complexity may derive from a bottom-up model just as easily as from a top-down model.

diversification of modes of production and the separation between unequal classes). This was the most difficult feature to locate at Sanchi since the Sanchi *saṁgha* was not a state (or civilization) in the standard sense. Rather, the complexity of the institution, as I see it, may be best analyzed through its written products. Although we cannot confirm that any part of the Pāli Canon was ever present at Sanchi, many sentiments probably were given the nature of the Buddhist literatures. By surveying rules disallowing monastics from possessing money or engaging in transactions along with the positive themes towards the cultivation found in the Sutta-Piṭaka, I found an element of institutional complexity. The two-fold attitude towards wealth (negative for the monastics and positive for the laity) represent conflicting notions since more often than not the Buddha urges the laity to use their cultivated wealth to support the *saṁgha*, which was generally barred from engaging in transactions. However, the micro-economic habits as they were found in Sanchi's donative records were indicative of a complex, blurred stance on wealth, probably because a certain elite segment of the institution recognized its importance. Therefore, the *saṁgha*'s increased macro-economic habit, that is, the expansion and increased utilization of the patronage network from SG1 to SG2, was a ancillary reflection of the institution's ongoing social complexity. On one hand, there was a strong impulse to restrict the economic habit whereas on the other hand there was a strong impulse to engage, cultivate, and even formally administer the economic habit using canonical, normative, textual structures.

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[732] This discussion is taken up in Robin Coningham. "Dark Age or Continuum?" In *The Archaeology of Early Historic South Asia*, edited by F R Allchin, 54–72, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

At least three "seeds" were germane to the *saṁgha*'s surge from burgeoning group to legitimized institution. All three of these "seeds" represent the growing pains of the Sanchi institution. Given that "one [*saṁgha*] size does not fit all"[733] landscapes during the Early Historic Period, the history and growth of the Sanchi Buddhist institution may not match the history and growth of another Buddhist *saṁgha* emerging elsewhere in the Indian subcontinent.

Critiquing "Legitimation Theory"

Before moving on to concluding remarks, I must address one major potential trap stemming from these theoretical considerations. Historical models using the concept of "legitimation" may overly rely on so-called reductionist explanations by over-privileging the power of social and economic factors. For example, Sheldon Pollock characterizes such explanations as "functionalist" and therefore suffering from the same critique. He argued,

> We can read this from the record of the concept's deployment in historical-sociological analysis: the extract of surplus, as we saw, "required new forms of religio-political legitimation"; there existed an "urgent necessity" to raise the status of rulers "in order to legitimize the claim to a regular system of imposts"; "a tremendous need of additional legitimation" of their new status and wealth was felt on the part of Southeast Asian chiefs. Legitimation theory is thus open to the wider critique of functionalism…[Giddens] argues … that social systems "have no 'needs'"; "not even the most deeply sedimented institutional features of societies need them to do so. They come about *historically*, as a result of concrete conditions that have in every case to be directly analyzed; the same holds for their persistence or their dissolution."
>
> […]
>
> As already suggested, legitimation implies the attempt, through the application of ideas or acts, to make a political or other phenomenon appear to conform to a set of norms when ex hypothesi it may not. Such a theory of action is vulnerable to various criticisms. It rests either on a model of of consensual rational choice that is largely belied by experience, or on what is almost a conspiracy theory of politics: "legitimation" suggests a knowledge-ability on the parts of rulers that is

[733] Hawkes, "One Size Does Not Fit All."

> unavailable to people at large, who are therefore cultural dopes and dupes, since they are induced to believe in ideas opposed to their interests that rulers know to be such.[734]

Pollock's discussion is powerful and warrants consideration, especially because we are both attempting to study premodern South Asia and account for socio-political change over time. Unfortunately, the critique is not completely apt due to the differences in material at hand. Pollock's critique comes from the accumulated evidence beginning with the Sanskrit cosmopolis; that is, his argument begins from about the 1st century CE onwards. It is fortunate for Pollock that the Sanskrit cosmopolis begins when it does—for the Buddhists, too, who adapted Sanskrit very early on—because that is also the approximate timeframe for which we get a substantial increase in the amount of available evidence to study, whether it is textual, epigraphic, archaeological, or otherwise. Put simply, Pollock—and others—may chastise "legitimation models" from this vantage point since they have the advantage of what we might call good data streamlined across a multiplicity of geographic and chronographic spaces. Prior to the turn into the Common Era there is, to begin with, little evidence compounded by almost two centuries of problematic investigation, especially at places like Sanchi where there is little active archaeological work being done. I would contend that we must work with what we have, and the tentative conclusions I have drawn here, to me, are, at least currently, best served in a model which is similar to classical "legitimation" explanations of culture and power.

Further, I would also like to put forward the notion that the models I present are not final nor are they the only potential models for the data. It is unlikely that the Buddhist *saṁgha* in and around Sanchi during the last few centuries BCE unilaterally accepted

[734] Pollock, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men*, pp. 521-522, citing Anthony Giddens. *A*

what Pollock might typify in my argument as the "hegemony of the monastic elite." What is missing from the story derived from my evidence is the resistance to religious change from, say, pre-SG1 to SG1 to SG2. Those voices have not survived in any surveyable form that I know. As a result, I am left with, by and large, the voices of the Gotiputas—or perhaps just the one enshrined Gotiputa—and other monastics who were likely very amenable to their/his leadership. Moreover, as Lars Fogelin has argued,

> … the archaeological use of the concept of legitimization should be materially problemitized more than it is in the past. Not all religious phenomena, even in state societies, served to legitimize elite authority. Even in cases where evidence of legitimation does exist, an examination of the specific techniques used to legitimize authority—and whose authority is being legitimized—can be archaeological useful.[735]

His research has shown us that even if legitimizing techniques are at work in places like Buddhist monasteries they are not forever. Rather, they can be overturned and left hallow. In the end, we may conclude that while legitimation models are useful, they are not complete explanations of historical processes and do not tell the whole story even if they are tempting and useful since there is always more data to find, analyze, and synthesize.

6.4 FUTURE TRAJECTORIES

From the perspective of either the history of Buddhism or the history of South Asia my case study here is quite small because of the restricted timeline analyzed. However, because of its relatively narrow focus on a single site and its patronage network I was able to formulate a historical model informed from a variety of sources. There are many future trajectories I could take to expand on the findings presented here. Casting a wider net, I could compare and contrast the Sanchi network with, for instance, the Bharhut,

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Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981, p. 18.

[735] Lars Fogelin. "Delegitimizing Religion." In *Belief in the Past*, edited by K Hayes-Gilpin and D S Whitely, 129–42. The Archaeology of Religion as… Archaeology, Walnut Creek, CA: 2008, pp. 139-140.

Amaravati, or Kanaganahalli[736] networks since those sites also contain a large cache of donative inscriptions.

Additionally, a detailed analysis of art historical sources, including those at Sanchi, could provide excellent context for the donative inscriptions which only begin to tell the story associated with the phenomenon of monumentality. Both types of sources, epigraphic and artistic, often intersect more than I discussed in Chapter 1. Such intersections create unique material cultural texts that could add great amounts of information to the timeline at Sanchi.

As it pertains to timelines, another major future trajectory would be to expand the research to more thoroughly include the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta eras. A longer timeline would mean greater perspective and might indicate just how unique a set of actors like the Gotiputas were (or not). Including more groups or families that can be traced by their metronymics would go far in creating a realistic roster of early Buddhists and their practices. Lastly, comparing and contrasting geographic and regional developments occurring in places like Gandhara, Sri Lanka, the Himalayan regions, and Burma would allow bigger questions to be asked from the source material. Some questions might concern the role of polities in creating and maintaining patronage networks, or the role of non-Buddhist ideologies coming from sources like the Dharmaśāstras.

Although I utilized archaeological theoretical concepts to paint the picture of the elites in the Sanchi patronage network, it may be advantageous to ask other kinds of

[736] Only recently has the publication of the more than 300 inscriptions from Kanaganahalli come to my attention. See Maiko Nakanishi, and Oskar von Hinüber. "Kanaganahalli Inscriptions." *ARIRIAB* 17, Supplement (2014): 1–149. I anxious seek to explore this corpus more thoroughly.

questions from the text. For instance, instead of inquiring about materiality and how the donative inscriptions may throw light on how monuments came into existence, I could ask questions rooted deeper in religious ideology. In such a study, the development of intentionality (to transfer merit) within the epigraphic corpus would not be restricted to only supplementing the materialist questions I asked. I might connect this phenomenon with the development of the word *deyadhama*, (=Skt. *deyadharma*, 'religious or pious gift') which in about the 1st century CE replaced the word *dāna* ('gift') as the concluding marker in donative epigraphic formula. A question along this line of reasoning that could draw upon a large body of evidence could be "how was the Buddhist virtue of charity practiced?" This kind of question flips the inquiry from addressing historical development to a discussion of how Buddhist belief, as represented in its texts, converges with practice.

For now, I am satisfied to conclude by delineating a model of institutional development for the Buddhist *saṁgha* at Sanchi. The seeds of institutionalization help us to visualize how the *saṁgha* mobilized order, legitimacy, and wealth to raise the chances of its own survival in an unforgiving, competitive religious landscape where the institution or state with the most resources tends to endure while others diminish, fail, or are subsumed. Buddhism at Sanchi beat the odds—and rag-wearing mendicants disallowed from money and property discovered and managed to extract hidden riches from the invisible network latent in the surrounding geography.

Appendix A – Donors by Locality

Table A.1: Donor Localities in SG1

MM #	TSUK #	DONOR	AFFIL.	GENDER	PIECE	GEN.	KIN/TITLE	VILLAGE	FRAG.	LOCATION
674	732	Isidāsi	nun	female	RP	SG1A	mother?	???	YES	stūpa 2
470	456	Laghā		female	Berm	SG1B		...sārapāda	YES	stūpa 1
660	718	Nāgapiya	seṭhin	male	RP	SG1A		Achāvaḍa		stūpa 2
593	579	Nadinī		female	Berm	SG1B		Achavaṭa		stūpa 1
567	553			female	Berm	SG1B	mother	Achāvāṭa	YES	stūpa 1
686	744	Agila		male	CS	SG1A		Adhapura		stūpa 2
718	776	Āvāsika		male	BR	SG1A		Ājanāva		stūpa 2
659	717	Āvāsika		male	CB	SG1A		Ājanāva		stūpa 2
669	727	…-data	monk	male	RP	SG1A		Anammita	YES	stūpa 2
655	713	Budharakhita	monk	male	CB	SG1A		Anaṁmita	YES	stūpa 2
631	689	Budharakhita	monk	male	CS	SG1A	sutātika	Arapāna		stūpa 2
628	614	Gagaṁdata	monk	male	Stair	SG1B		Aṭhakanagara		stūpa 1
636	694	Budhila		male	CS	SG1A		Bhogavaḍhana		stūpa 2
478	464	Baladatā		female	Berm	SG1B		Cuḍamoragiri		stūpa 1
572	558	Samika	monk	male	Berm	SG1B	atevāsin	Cuḍamoragiri		stūpa 1
573	559	Samika	monk	male	Berm	SG1B	atevāsin	Cuḍamoragiri		stūpa 1
642	700	Village Cuḍamoragiri		mixed	RP	SG1A		Cuḍamoragiri		stūpa 2
520	506	… mitā		female	Berm	SG1B		Ejavati	YES	stūpa 1
615	601	Anurādha	monk	male	Stair	SG1B		Goṇada		stūpa 1
617	603	Anurādha	monk	male	Stair	SG1B		Goṇada		stūpa 1
495	481			female	Berm	SG1B	mother	Kapasi	YES	stūpa 1
582	568				Berm	SG1B		Kapāsi	YES	stūpa 1
539	525		nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Kāpāsi	YES	stūpa 1
526	512	Utarā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Kāpāsī		stūpa 1
480	466	Arahadasī		female	Berm	SG1B		Katakanu	YES	stūpa 1
544	530	Arahadāsī?		female	Berm	SG1B		Katakanu	YES	stūpa 1
575	561				Berm	SG1B		Katakanu	YES	stūpa 1
584	570				Berm	SG1B		Katakanu	YES	stūpa 1
469	455	Bhaḍika	monk	male	Berm	SG1B		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
611	597	Kāḍā, Subhagā, Pusā, Nāgadata, Sagharakhita		mixed	Stair	SG1B		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
476	462	Sevāsirī		female	Berm	SG1B		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
550	536	Achāviti	nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1

618	604	Arahaguta		male	Stair	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
620	606	Arahaguta		male	Stair	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
536	522	Arāhagutā		female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
537	523	Arahāpālitā		female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
716	774	Badhaka	monk	male	BR	SG1A		Kurara		stūpa 2
531	517	Belevā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
619	605	Dataka	monk	male	Stair	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
562	548	Dhamasenā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
564	550	Dhamasenā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
664	722	Dhamasenā	nun	female	RP	SG1A		Kurara		stūpa 2
560	546	Kaṇā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B	daughter	Kurara		stūpa 1
561	547	Kaṇā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B	daughter	Kurara		stūpa 1
532	518	Kānā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B	daughter	Kurara		stūpa 1
535	521	Nāgādinā		female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
602	588	Pusadatā		female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
640	698	Sagharakhita	monk	male	RP	SG1A		Kurara		stūpa 2
551	537	Saghārakhitā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
533	519	Saṁghapālitā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
662	720	Sapakī	nun	female	RP	SG1A		Kurara		stūpa 2
559	545	Sātilā		female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
563	549	Siridevī		female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara		stūpa 1
579	565	Vala…			Berm	SG1B		Kurara	YES	stūpa 1
663	721	Valī	nun	female	CB	SG1A		Kurara		stūpa 2
517	503		upasika	female	Berm	SG1B		Kurara	YES	stūpa 1
558	544				Berm	SG1B		Kurara	YES	stūpa 1
477	463				Berm	SG1B		Kuthupāda	YES	stūpa 1
540	526	Avisanā		female	Berm	SG1B		Madalachikata		stūpa 1
680	738	Avisenā		female	RP	SG1A		Madalachikata		stūpa 2
643	701				RP	SG1A		Morayahikaṭa	YES	stūpa 2
465	451	Acalā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
511	497	Amatā		female	Berm	SG1B		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
623	609	Arahā	nun	female	Stair	SG1B		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
703	761	Asadevā	nun	female	BR	SG1A		Nadinagara		stūpa 2
714	772	Asadevā	nun	female	BR	SG1A		Nadinagara		stūpa 2
503	489	Bhutaka		male	Berm	SG1B		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
483	469	Gaḍā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
690	748	Gaḍā	nun	female	CB	SG1A		Nadinagara		stūpa 2

601	587	Kāboja	monk	male	Berm	SG1B		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
622	608	Pusasirī	nun	female	Stair	SG1B		Nadinagara	YES	stūpa 1
599	585	Rebila		male	Berm	SG1B		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
466	452	Rohaṇidevā		female	Berm	SG1B		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
600	586	Utaradatā		female	Berm	SG1B	daughter	Nadinagara		stūpa 1
667	725	Utaradatā		female	CB	SG1A	daughter	Nadinagara	YES	stūpa 2
485	471				Berm	SG1B		Nadinagara	YES	stūpa 1
586	572				Berm	SG1B		Nadinagara	YES	stūpa 1
512	498	Juṭa		male	Berm	SG1B		Osena		stūpa 1
507	493	Mahika		male	Berm	SG1B		Osena		stūpa 1
629	615	Visākha		male	Stair	SG1B		Pāḍāna		stūpa 1
658	716	Visākha		male	RP	SG1A		Pāḍāna		stūpa 2
649	707	Budhapālita	seṭhin	male	CS	SG1A		Paḍukulika		stūpa 2
635	693	village Pāḍukulika		mixed	RP	SG1A		Pāḍukulika		stūpa 2
608	594	Nagadata		male	Harm	SG1B		Patiṭhana		stūpa 1
717	775			male	BR	SG1A		Patiṭhana		stūpa 2
546	532			male	Berm	SG1B		Patiṭhāna		stūpa 1
569	555	Suriyā and Budhadevā		female	Berm	SG1B		Pemuta		stūpa 1
675	733	Budharakhita	monk	male	CS	SG1A	Aya	Pokhara		stūpa 2
694	752	Nāgarakhita	monk	male	CS	SG1A		Pokhara		stūpa 2
654	712		monk	male	RP	SG1A	Aya	Pokhara	YES	stūpa 2
592	578			male	Berm	SG1B		Puruviḍa	YES	stūpa 1
522	508	Village of Rohanipada			Berm	SG1B		Rohanipada		stūpa 1
715	773	Visaka		male	BR	SG1A		Rohanipāda		stūpa 2
687	745	Bhūtagutā		female	CS	SG1A	daughter in law	Sagari		stūpa 2
671	729	Balaka	monk	male	RP	SG1A	atevasin	Sasāda		stūpa 2
475	461	Yona		male	Berm	SG1B		Setapatha		stūpa 1
685	743	Budhagutā		female	CS	SG1A		Sidakaḍa		stūpa 2
683	741	Budhapālitā		female	CS	SG1A		Sidakaḍa		stūpa 2
682	740	Golā		female	CS	SG1A		Sidakaḍa		stūpa 2
679	737	Tikisa		male	CS	SG1A		Sidakaḍa		stūpa 2
681	739			female	CS	SG1A		Sidakaḍa	YES	stūpa 2
647	705	Saghamita	monk	male	RP	SG1A		Sonada		stūpa 2
684	742	Saghamita	monk	male	RP	SG1A		Sonada		stūpa 2
585	571	Saṁgharakhita		male	Berm	SG1B		Tākārāpada		stūpa 1
613	599	Nadagiri		male	Stair	SG1B		Tākāripada		stūpa 1

606	592	Saṁgharakhita		male	Berm	SG1B		Tākāripāda		stūpa 1
650	708	Budhaguta		male	RP	SG1A		Udubaraghara		stūpa 2
652	710	Rohaṇika		male	RP	SG1A		Udubaraghara		stūpa 2
556	542	Arahā		female	Berm	SG1B		Ujena	YES	stūpa 1
568	554	Asvarakhitā		female	Berm	SG1B		Ujena		stūpa 1
587	573	Balikā		female	Berm	SG1B		Ujena		stūpa 1
591	577	Mitā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Ujena		stūpa 1
605	591	Revā		female	Berm	SG1B		Ujena		stūpa 1
609	595	Vasulā		female	Harm	SG1B		Ujena		stūpa 1
571	557			female	Berm	SG1B	mother	Ujena	YES	stūpa 1
590	576				Berm	SG1B		Ujena	YES	stūpa 1
543	529		nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Vadivahana	YES	stūpa 1
612	598	Caḍika	monk	male	Stair	SG1B		Vāḍivahana		stūpa 1
676	734	Viṇhukā		female	RP	SG1A		Vāḍivahana		stūpa 2
487	473	Palā	nun	female	Berm	SG1B		Vāḍivahana?		stūpa 1
578	564	Kasapa	monk	male	Berm	SG1B		Vejaja		stūpa 1
598	584	Mahirakhita		male	Berm	SG1B		Vitirinaha?		stūpa 1

Table A.2: Donor Localities in SG2

MM #	TSUK #	DONOR	AFFIL.	GENDER	PIECE	GEN.	KIN/TITLE	VILLAGE	FRAG.	LOCATION
211	197	Sāmanera?	seṭhin	male	RP	SG2		Aba		stūpa 1
212	198	Sāmanera?	seṭhin	male	RP	SG2		Aba		stūpa 1
279	265	Dhamarakhita	monk	male	CS	SG2	Māthara?	Achavaṭa		stūpa 1
250	236	Asāḍra	monk	male	CB	SG2		Arapana	YES	stūpa 1
224	210	Arahadina		male	CB	SG2		Arapana		stūpa 1
263	249	Devaka		male	CB	SG2		Arapana		stūpa 1
357	343	Kususirī		female	CB	SG2		Arapana		stūpa 1
336	322			female	CB	SG2	mother	Arapana	YES	stūpa 1
62	48	Sihā		female	CB	SG2		Arapāna		stūpa 1
345	331	Asavati village		mixed	RP	SG2		Asavati		stūpa 1
322	308	Pala		male	CB	SG2		Asāvati		stūpa 1
386	372	Isiguta	vāneja	male	CB	SG2		Asvavati		stūpa 1
217	203			female	CB	SG2	mother	Bedakaḍa	YES	stūpa 1
300	286	Yasopāla		male	CB	SG2		Bhadanakaḍa?		stūpa 1
262	248	Seyasa		male	CB	SG2		Bhadanakaṭa		stūpa 1

156	142	Ajitiguta		male	CB	SG2		Bhogavadhana		stūpa 1
162	148	Dhamarakhitā		female	CB	SG2	mother	Bhogavadhana		stūpa 1
163	149	Dhamarakhitā		female	CB	SG2	mother	Bhogavadhana		stūpa 1
237	223	Dhañi		male	CB	SG2		Bhogavadhana		stūpa 1
234	220	Isirakhitā		female	CB	SG2		Bhogavadhana		stūpa 1
236	222				CB	SG2		Bhogavadhana	YES	stūpa 1
374	360	Mahida		male	CB	SG2		Bhogavaḍhana		stūpa 1
302	288	Pusa	monk	male	CS	SG2		Cahaṭa		stūpa 1
213	199	Pusa	monk	male	CB	SG2		Cahaṭa		stūpa 1
64	50			male	RP	SG2		Cuḍa…girika	YES	stūpa 1
96	82	the Bodha-goṭhi		mixed	CB	SG2		Dhamavaḍhana		stūpa 1
97	83	the Bodha-goṭhi		mixed	CB	SG2		Dhamavaḍhana		stūpa 1
98	84	the Bodha-goṭhi		mixed	CB	SG2		Dhamavaḍhana		stūpa 1
226	212	Budharakhita	monk	male	CB	SG2		Ejavata		stūpa 1
63	49	Vāhila		male	CS	SG2		Ejavata		stūpa 1
39	25	Dhamayasa	monk	male	CS	SG2		Ejāvata		stūpa 1
145	131	Sātila		male	CB	SG2		Erakina		stūpa 1
180	166	Dhamarakhita	monk	male	CB	SG2		Kacupatha		stūpa 1
181	167	Dhamarakhitā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Kacupatha		stūpa 1
41	27	Devabhāgā	seṭhin	female	CB	SG2	wife	Kaṁdaḍigāma		stūpa 1
42	28	Nāgā	seṭhin	female	CB	SG2	wife	Kaṁdaḍigāma		stūpa 1
44	30	Pusā	seṭhin	female	CB	SG2	wife	Kaṁdaḍigāma		stūpa 1
43	29		seṭhin	male	RP	SG2		Kaṁdaḍigāma	YES	stūpa 1
45	31	Vaḍha		male	CB	SG2		Kaṁdaḍigāma		stūpa 1
143	129	Araha		male	CB	SG2		Kāpāsigama		stūpa 1
146	132	Araha		male	CB	SG2		Kāpāsigama		stūpa 1
190	176	Patuḍa	monk	male	CS	SG2	Aya	Katakanu		stūpa 1
366	352	Arahadāsa		male	RP	SG2		Katakanu		stūpa 1
150	136	Araha		male	CB	SG2		Kaṭakanu		stūpa 1
151	137	Bhādaka		male	CB	SG2		Kaṭakanu		stūpa 1
147	133	Badhaka	monk	male	CB	SG2		Koḍijila?		stūpa 1
85	71	Sagharakhitā	nun	female	CS	SG2	atevasin	Koramika?		stūpa 1
118	104	Sagharakhitā	nun	female	CB	SG2	atevasin	Koramika?		stūpa 1
376	362	Nadagiri		male	CB	SG2		Kothukapada		stūpa 1
209	195	Bhadhika	monk	male	CB	SG2	Aya	Kuraghara		stūpa 1
373	359	Bhaḍika	monk	male	RP	SG2	Aya	Kuraghara		stūpa 1

371	357		monk	male	RP	SG2		Kuraghara	YES	stūpa 1
372	358	Piyadhamā and Bodhī	nun	female	RP	SG2		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
370	356	Sihā and Devadatā	nun	female	RP	SG2		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
347	333	Sihā and Vajānikā and mom	nun	female	CS	SG2		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
337	323	Sīha	seṭhin	male	RP	SG2		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
339	325	Sīha	seṭhin	male	RP	SG2		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
324	310	Ghosaka		male	RP	SG2		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
91	77	Isimitā		female	CB	SG2		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
93	79	Nagamitā		female	CB	SG2		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
94	80	Nagamitā		female	CB	SG2		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
90	76	Narā		female	CB	SG2		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
319	305	Subhaga		male	RP	SG2		Kuraghara		stūpa 1
104	90				CB	SG2		Kuraghara	YES	stūpa 1
316	302	Kiṭī	nun	female	RP	SG2		Kurara		stūpa 1
227	213	Isidatā	nun	female	CS	SG2		Kurara		stūpa 1
167	153	Mitasirī	nun	female	CS	SG2		Kurara		stūpa 1
166	152	Saghā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Kurara		stūpa 1
272	258	Saghā	nun	female	CS	SG2		Kurara		stūpa 1
243	229	Dhamaka		male	RP	SG2		Kurara		stūpa 1
225	211	Naṁda		male	RP	SG2		Kurara		stūpa 1
231	217	Naṁda		male	RP	SG2		Kurara		stūpa 1
235	221	Naṁda		male	RP	SG2		Kurara		stūpa 1
309	295	Saṁvalita		male	CB	SG2		Kurara		stūpa 1
136	122			female	CB	SG2	mother	Kurara	YES	stūpa 1
230	216	Dhamapāla		male	CB	SG2		Kuthukapada		stūpa 1
341	327	Balikā and other nuns	nun	female	CB	SG2		Madalachikata		stūpa 1
378	364	Datā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Madalachikata		stūpa 1
304	290	Avisinā	nun	female	CB	SG2	sutātikini (versed in sutta-s)	Maḍalachikaṭa		stūpa 1
305	291	Avisinā	nun	female	CB	SG2	sutātikini (versed in sutta-s)	Maḍalachikaṭa		stūpa 1
315	301	Balikā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Maḍalachikaṭa		stūpa 1
312	298	Dhamasirī	nun	female	CB	SG2		Maḍalachikaṭa		stūpa 1
342	328	Dhamasirī	nun	female	CB	SG2		Maḍalachikaṭa		stūpa 1
313	299	Pāḍā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Maḍalachikaṭa		stūpa 1
228	214	Dhamaguta	monk	male	CB	SG2		Madhuvana		stūpa 1

287	273	Budharakhitā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Madhuvana		stūpa 1
155	141	Isidatā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Madhuvana		stūpa 1
50	36	Devabhāgā	nun	female	CS	SG2		Madhuvana		stūpa 1
295	281	Dhamarakhitā		female	CB	SG2		Madhuvana		stūpa 1
296	282	Dhamarakhitā		female	CB	SG2		Madhuvana		stūpa 1
298	284	Sīhagiri		male	RP	SG2		Mahāmoragiri		stūpa 1
365	351	Nāgila	seṭhin	male	RP	SG2		Mahisati		stūpa 1
252	238	Nāgila	seṭhin	male	CB	SG2		Mahisati		stūpa 1
275	261	Arihadatā		female	CB	SG2		Mahisati		stūpa 1
256	242	Bhagavā		female	CB	SG2		Mahisati		stūpa 1
274	260	Bhūtikā		female	CB	SG2		Mahisati		stūpa 1
276	262	Devabhaga		male	CB	SG2		Mahisati		stūpa 1
253	239	Gāgi		male	CB	SG2		Mahisati		stūpa 1
251	237	Jilāna		male	CB	SG2		Mahisati		stūpa 1
254	240	Visadevā		female	CB	SG2		Mahisati		stūpa 1
359	345	Morājābhikaṭa village		mixed	CS	SG2		Morājāabhikaṭa		stūpa 1
385	371	Devarakhita	monk	male	CB	SG2		Morājāhakaṭa		stūpa 1
157	143	Arahadina		male	CB	SG2		Morajahikaḍa		stūpa 1
158	144	Arahadina		male	CB	SG2		Morajahikaḍa		stūpa 1
159	145	Sihadata		male	CB	SG2		Morajahikaḍa		stūpa 1
169	155	Kāboja	monk	male	CB	SG2		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
170	156	Acalā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
320	306	Isidasī	nun	female	CB	SG2		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
277	263	Pusā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
281	267	Siridinā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
323	309	Vāsavā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
358	344	Vasudatā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
314	300		nun	female	CB	SG2		Nadinagara	YES	stūpa 1
334	320	Dupasahā	nun	female	CS	SG2		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
255	241	Isidinā	nun	female	CS	SG2		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
280	266	Sirimitā	nun	female	CS	SG2		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
247	233		nun	female	CS	SG2		Nadinagara	YES	stūpa 1
356	342	Oḍī		female	RP	SG2		Nadinagara		stūpa 1
203	189	Pusagiri	monk	male	RP	SG2		Navagama		stūpa 1
183	169	Pusagiri	monk	male	CB	SG2		Navagama		stūpa 1
184	170	Pusagiri	monk	male	CB	SG2		Navagama		stūpa 1

185	171	Pusagiri	monk	male	CB	SG2		Navagama		stūpa 1
28	14	Samikā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Navagama		stūpa 1
164	150	Samikā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Navagama		stūpa 1
165	151	Samikā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Navagama		stūpa 1
70	56		upasika	female	CS	SG2		Navagama	YES	stūpa 1
261	247	Pusadata		male	CB	SG2		Navagama		stūpa 1
33	19	Disārakhita		male	RP	SG2		Navagāma		stūpa 1
186	172		monk	male	CS	SG2		Pāḍāna	YES	stūpa 1
350	336	Arahaka		male	RP	SG2		Paripana		stūpa 1
284	270				CB	SG2		Peḍita?	YES	stūpa 1
249	235	Supaṭhāmā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Pemuta		stūpa 1
311	297	Vajika		male	RP	SG2		Pemuta?		stūpa 1
129	115	Tuḍa		male	CB	SG2		Phujakapada		stūpa 1
286	272	Dhaṁmasiva		male	CB	SG2		Poḍaviḍa		stūpa 1
282	268	Isidina		male	CB	SG2		Poḍaviḍa		stūpa 1
283	269	Isidina		male	CB	SG2		Poḍaviḍa		stūpa 1
101	87	Arahadina	monk	male	CB	SG2		Pokhara		stūpa 1
273	259	Himagiri		male	RP	SG2		Pokhara		stūpa 1
330	316	Isidatā		female	CB	SG2	wife	Pokhara		stūpa 1
335	321	Isidatā		female	CB	SG2		Pokhara		stūpa 1
333	319	Tuḍā		male	CB	SG2		Pokhara		stūpa 1
259	245			male	RP	SG2		Pokhara	YES	stūpa 1
278	264	Dhamadatā		female	CB	SG2		Puñavaḍhana		stūpa 1
328	314	Nāgadina	seṭhin	male	RP	SG2		Rohaṇipada		stūpa 1
331	317	Bulika		male	RP	SG2		Rohaṇipada		stūpa 1
332	318	Isika		male	RP	SG2		Rohaṇipada		stūpa 1
329	315	Nigaḍi		male	RP	SG2		Rohaṇipada		stūpa 1
310	296	Arahaguta	monk	male	CB	SG2		Sasāda		stūpa 1
161	147	Dhanaka	monk	male	RP	SG2	Aya	Subhagapatha		stūpa 1
294	280	Dhanaka	monk	male	CS	SG2	Aya	Subhagapatha		stūpa 1
89	75	Yona?		female	RP	SG2		Svethapatha		stūpa 1
135	121	Kujara	seṭhin	male	RP	SG2	brother	Taṁbalamaḍa		stūpa 1
223	209	Kujara	seṭhin	male	CB	SG2	brother	Taṁbalamaḍa		stūpa 1
176	162	Nāgā	upasika	female	CB	SG2		Tiriḍapada		stūpa 1
177	163	Nāgā	upasika	female	CB	SG2		Tiriḍapada		stūpa 1
16	2	Dhañā	gahapati	female	CB	SG2	sister in law	Tubavana		stūpa 1
18	4	Patiṭhiya	gahapati	male	CB	SG2		Tubavana		stūpa 1

20	6	Patiṭhiya	gahapati	male	CB	SG2		Tubavana		stūpa 1
21	7	Patiṭhiya	gahapati	male	CB	SG2		Tubavana		stūpa 1
17	3	Vesamanadatā	gahapati	female	CB	SG2	daughter in law	Tubavana		stūpa 1
346	332	Virā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Tubavana		stūpa 1
191	177	Dhamaka		male	RP	SG2		Udubaraghara		stūpa 1
194	180	Siharakhita		male	RP	SG2		Udubaraghara		stūpa 1
216	202	Sīharakhita		male	RP	SG2		Udubaraghara		stūpa 1
193	179	Soṇadevā		female	CB	SG2	wife	Udubaraghara		stūpa 1
192	178	Soṇadevā, Parijā, Agidevā		female	CB	SG2	wife	Udubaraghara		stūpa 1
112	98	Svatiguta		male	CB	SG2		Ugira?		stūpa 1
111	97	Svatiguta		male	RP	SG2		Ugira?		stūpa 1
133	119		monk	male	CB	SG2		Ujena	YES	stūpa 1
83	69	Kāḍī	nun	female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
84	70	Kāḍī	nun	female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
60	46	some mother	nun	female	CB	SG2	mother	Ujena		stūpa 1
248	234		nun	female	CB	SG2		Ujena	YES	stūpa 1
38	24	Pusā	upasika	female	RP	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
317	303	Revā	upasika	female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
26	12	Sirikā	upasika	female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
61	47	Isidata	vāneja	male	RP	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
27	13	Sirikā	upasika	female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
58	44	Sirikā	upasika	female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
59	45		upasika	female	CB	SG2		Ujena	YES	stūpa 1
245	231	Agisimā		female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
380	366	Balakā		female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
71	57	Dhamadatā		female	RP	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
79	65	Budhā		female	CB	SG2	sister	Ujena		stūpa 1
82	68	Devalā		female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
32	18	Budharakhita	monk	male	CS	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
40	26	Dhamaka (family?)		group	RP	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
65	51	Dhamagiri		male	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
303	289	Nāga	monk	male	CS	SG2	Aya, thera	Ujena		stūpa 1
116	102	Gohila and Visa		male	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
78	64	Himadata		female	CB	SG2	sister	Ujena		stūpa 1
92	78	Isika		male	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1

72	58	Isimita		male	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
80	66	Ja…		female	CB	SG2	daughter	Ujena		stūpa 1
285	271	Mitā		female	RP	SG2	daughter in law	Ujena		stūpa 1
368	354	Mulā		female	RP	SG2	wife	Ujena		stūpa 1
76	62	Muladatā		female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
74	60	Najā		female	CB	SG2	daughter in law	Ujena		stūpa 1
66	52	Rohaṇi		male	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
114	100	Saghaka		male	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
68	54	Saṁghadata		male	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
87	73	Sihadatā		female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
69	55	Sona		male	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
67	53	Sulāsa		male	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
49	35	some mother		female	RP	SG2	mother	Ujena		stūpa 1
77	63	Vayadatā		female	CB	SG2	wife	Ujena		stūpa 1
75	61	Vāyadatā		female	CB	SG2	wife	Ujena		stūpa 1
73	59	Vayudatā		female	CB	SG2	wife	Ujena		stūpa 1
86	72	Vipulā		female	CB	SG2		Ujena		stūpa 1
88	74			female	CB	SG2	mother	Ujena	YES	stūpa 1
115	101			mixed	CB	SG2		Ujena	YES	stūpa 1
379	365				CB	SG2		Ujena	YES	stūpa 1
103	89			mixed	RP	SG2		Ujena (Kakaḍa)	YES	stūpa 1
113	99	Gonaṁdaka	tāpasa	male	CB	SG2		Ujena?		stūpa 1
327	313	Jitamitā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Vaḍivahana		stūpa 1
22	8	some nuns	nun	female	CS	SG2		Vāḍivahana		stūpa 1
24	10	Oḍaka		male	CB	SG2		Vāḍivahana		stūpa 1
264	250			female	CS	SG2		Vaghumata	YES	stūpa 1
138	124	Saghadanā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Vāghumata		stūpa 1
198	184	Yakhī	nun	female	RP	SG2		Vājivahana		stūpa 1
382	368	Nagadatā	asavārika (trooper)	female	CB	SG2	wife	Vedisa	YES	stūpa 1
321	307	Nāgadatā	asavārika (trooper)	female	CB	SG2	wife	Vedisa		stūpa 1
325	311	Nāgadatā	asavārika (trooper)	female	CB	SG2	wife	Vedisa		stūpa 1
244	230	Gaḍā	nun	female	CB	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
344	330	Vajinī	nun	female	CB	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
137	123	Yakhī	nun	female	CB	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
15	1	Arahatarakhita		male	RP	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
107	93	Datakalavaḍa		male	CB	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1

110	96	Datakalavaḍa		male	CB	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
353	339	Datakalavāḍa		male	CB	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
354	340	Datakalavāḍa		male	CB	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
355	341	Datakalavāḍa		male	CB	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
178	164	goṭhi		mixed	RP	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
318	304	Mohikā	nun	female	CS	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
174	160	Naṁdutarā	nun	female	CS	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
220	206	Odatikā	nun	female	CS	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
388	374	Sirī	nun	female	CS	SG2		Vedisa		stūpa 1
139	125	Dhaṁmaka		male	RP	SG2		Vejaja		stūpa 1
308	294	Vejaja village		mixed	RP	SG2		Vejaja		stūpa 1
306	292	Saghadeva	vāneja	male	RP	SG2		Verohakaṭa?		stūpa 1
160	146	Sijhā	ghariṇi	female	CS	SG2		Virahakaṭa		stūpa 1
288	274	Bharaḍiya		male	CB	SG2	sapurisa	Yugapaja?		stūpa 1

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